


FREE

# Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk April 26, 2015

WEEKLY FREE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

East edition No 657

 QDF ENERGY London and South of England Media Awards

## POLITICS

### Captain of a sinking ship?

How Ukip could be left empty-handed

## ENVIRONMENT

### Why we're sitting on 'thousands' of bombs

Incredible truth of our wartime past

## PROPERTY

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## Never forget the power of sound good manners

GOOD manners, so the saying goes, don't cost much. Yet they are so often the fluid which oils the wheels of our everyday social interactions.

For the vast majority of us, they are a given. Someone holds the door open, you thank them. Someone says hello, you greet them back. You pass someone something, they show a sign of appreciation. It is all pretty basic stuff.

Yet, just like when an engine dries of lubrication, so the lack of manners can jar and cause consideration damage to your mood.

Granted, if you move out of the way for someone in the supermarket so their trolley can get past, you don't expect a standing ovation and the immediate awarding of a medal. But failure of acknowledgement can make you want to ram your trolley into the back of their heels in a sense of revenge entirely unbalanced with the minor slight.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

When we get in our cars, as is so often the case, a sense of a lack of good manners can turn the most calm and placid individual into one who snarls and seethes in the confines of his expensive metal box, barking out expletives as a parade of vehicles drive past having stopped to let them pass...all of whom do so without the slightest nod of gratitude.

Perhaps we would all be like that in the street, in the office, in the supermarket, too if we knew our outbursts could not be heard.

The reason for this? Merely that as we build to the final stages of an election where the populace complain en masse about politicians being out for no-one but themselves, we should examine ourselves, and our behaviour, to see if our day-to-day actions ensure that we do the bare minimum to help make this a better place. Enjoy your weekend.

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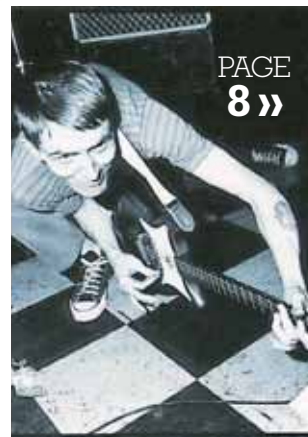
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## ‘Breaking point’ police see violent crime on rise

By Maria Chiorando

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A POLICE federation chief has blasted funding cuts, after Home Office statistics showed a sharp rise in violent crime being reported.

The figures saw sexual offences reported in Kent shoot up by 26 per cent, and violence with injury increase by 10 per cent between December 2013 and 2014.

However, it did reveal a 16 per cent drop in domestic burglary and, the force claims, more up-to-date figures reveal the rises are now slowing.

Ian Pointon, chairman of the Kent Police Federation, which represents rank and file officers, said cuts to police funding means the force is ‘beyond breaking point’.

He said: “If you keep cutting away at the policing budget, crime will keep increasing. Kent will face a further cut of £61 million. It is only going to get worse.”

He added that in some cases, increases in reported crimes could be down to other factors, such as the ‘Savile effect’ which has seen a surge of victims coming forward.

Kultar Nayar is a Kent divisional



**SQUEEZED:** Kent Police will struggle with further cuts but rising figures show cause for concern

manager for Victim Support. He said: “Only around half of the crimes that people say happened to them are reported to the police, and that’s despite a rise in police recorded crime figures.”

“Many victims of sexual violence fear that they will not be believed and so the person who raped them will never be charged with a

crime.”

A spokesman for Kent Police said: “The latest figures published by the Office of National Statistics do show an approximate five per cent increase in recorded crime in Kent.

“However, the very latest data compiled by Kent Police for the year ending in March 2015 shows that increase at a reduced rate of

1.3 per cent, which is encouraging.

“A more vigorous approach to recording crime, which has been recognised and acknowledged by HMIC, has seen a real focus on recording all offences reported during an incident as spate crimes.

“This has had a sizeable impact on all violence and sexual offences.”

## Window cleaner jailed after stabbing wife on grandmother’s grave

A 51-YEAR-OLD window cleaner who repeatedly stabbed his estranged wife in a graveyard, telling her to “go and sleep with your mum” has been sentenced to 20 years in jail after being found guilty of attempted murder at Maidstone Crown Court.

David Norris, formerly of Greenhithe, attacked his wife in the graveyard of a church in Southfleet on October 11 last year.

She suffered numerous stab wounds to her upper body, arms and hands, as well as a collapsed lung.

Their marriage had broken down in August that year.

But they had arranged to meet to lay flowers at the grave of Dionne Norris’ mother and then his grandmother, as they had done every year.

Norris collected the victim and they visited the first grave before having a conversation about their marriage and whether it could be saved.

The victim told him she did not want to argue and they agreed to carry on to the second graveyard as planned.

While the victim was unwrapping the bouquet of flowers, Norris told her: “If I can’t have you, no one can have you.”

He then lunged at her, knocking her over and grabbing her round the throat. He brandished a knife and stabbed her repeatedly.

A member of the public tried to intervene but Norris threatened him with the knife before turning to stab the victim again, telling her: “Go to sleep, go to sleep with your mum.”

After he had walked away, the member of the public returned and called the police, comforting the victim until the emergency services arrived.

Detective Inspector Gavin Moss said: “It is extremely fortunate that she did not suffer any fatal injuries and I would like to take this opportunity to commend her courage and wish her all the best in her continued recovery. This lengthy custodial sentence means he may finally recognise the horrendous ordeal he put his victim through.”

## TfL boss says Southeastern has staff ‘like the Gestapo’

TRANSPORT for London boss, Sir Peter Hendy, has launched a scathing attack on train firm Southeastern’s services, saying they were like the “Wild West”.

Sir Peter expressed the views in an interview with Management Today. He said: “On Southeastern the trains are like the Wild West. They are s\*\*t, awful. And then every now and then some people

who look like the Gestapo get on and fine everyone they can. It doesn’t improve your day, does it?”

But a Southeastern spokesman said: “We are really proud of our frontline teams and the work they do every day helping hundreds of thousands of passengers.

“It is disappointing that Peter Hendy’s comments do not reflect their dedication and hard work.”

## Special election coverage: All at www.kentnews.co.uk

WITH the general election now less than two weeks away, you can keep up-to-date with all the latest news in the build up to the polls on our dedicated election website.

Not only do we have all the latest news from the election trail, but you can find spotlights on every constituency in the county, giving you the clearest indication of the issues and likely outcome where

you live. There’s also an interactive map which immediately lets you know the size of a constituency’s majority and its MP prior to the dissolution of Parliament.

To see all the details, simply visit [www.kentnews.co.uk](http://www.kentnews.co.uk) and click the link to ‘Election 2015’.

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## Vile sex offender jailed after teenager assault

A SEX offender who preyed on a 13-year-old girl has been sentenced to four years in jail.

Roly Brooker, 56, of Clements Road, Ramsgate, was sentenced at Canterbury Crown Court this week.

Brooker admitted two charges of sexual activity with a child. The offences were carried out in January this year when he was decorating a house where the victim lived.

He tried to get her to play a sexual version of the game Truth or Dare.

Despite her refusals, he then carried out the assaults.

When she told her family what had happened they called police. He will remain on licence for an additional three years. Det Sgt Daniel Aylett said: "I'm pleased the court recognised the severity of his actions."

## Life for brutal beating of homeless man left in the porch of a parish church

By Jamie Weir

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A 40-YEAR-OLD who killed a homeless man by beating him so ferociously he broke every single one of his ribs in an attack lasting for more than 50 minutes, this week changed his plea to guilty and was sentenced to life behind bars.

Ruslan Piktorov, also of no fixed abode, killed Trevor Hillman in a ferocious attack which broke every single one of his ribs and lasted for more than 50 minutes. During the attack he removed his victim's belt - and then used it to strangle him.

The Lithuanian will have to serve a minimum of 18 years before he can be considered for parole.

The pair had been talking and eating together in the porch of St Peter and St Paul Parish Church in Headcorn on October 21, when Piktorov started to punch and stamp on his victim.

Piktorov, 40, had previously denied murdering the 57-year-old but changed his plea when he ap-



**GUILTY:** Ruslan Piktorov

peared at Maidstone Crown Court.

Mr Hillman was well known in the community and frequently slept in the porch. His body was found the following morning.

Before, and after the murder

Piktorov made a number of attempts to steal money from the victim's bank account.

After his body was discovered, Piktorov took a train that same day, leaving Headcorn for London. When he arrived in London, he approached police officers and told them that he 'may have killed someone'. CCTV images showed Piktorov stuffing a bag containing blood stained clothing into a bin at the station car park.

Appearing at court on Wednesday, Piktorov was sentenced to life.

Detective Inspector Lee Whitehead said: "Mr Hillman was a defenceless victim of a brutal attack which lasted almost an hour.

"Every single one of his ribs was broken and Piktorov continued to deliver blows when he lay motionless on the ground.

"The level of violence used to murder his victim was truly horrific. Mr Hillman was homeless, but he was very well known by a large number of people and this terrible crime has had a profound effect on the local community."



**ROCK:** Brian May

## Queen guitar hero donates to Tory fund

QUEEN guitarist Brian May has donated money to the campaign of Conservative candidate Tracey Crouch - one of a number of cross-party cash handouts he has made in the run-up to the election.

The superstar made a special visit this week to Bradfield Academy in Walderslade, part of Ms Crouch's Chatham and Aylesford constituency in which she is hoping to stand for re-election, where music is used as a form of therapy.

Ms Crouch told us: "Brian is running his Common Decency initiative. Rather than endorsing a single party, he is endorsing a number of candidates and I am one of those.

"This is because of my stance on things like the badger cull.

"Basically, he is endorsing particular candidates that he thinks have shown independence of mind and principles.

"I do know him personally. I have been working with him for the past three years on issues of animal welfare."

It is believed he donated around £2,000 to her campaign.

Previously, he has supported Caroline Lucas, the Green MP in Brighton.

Mr May said of his Common Decency campaign: "I treasure my colour blindness as regards political parties. I believe there are good, decent MPs in every party."

## Tributes are paid to honorary alderman

THE former mayor and council leader of Gravesham Borough Council, Frank Gibson, has died aged 89.

Mr Gibson became mayor in 1985, being made an honorary freeman of the borough in 1995 in recognition of his service to the area. He was also a county council member, and in 1994 was awarded an OBE for his services to Kent County Council.

He was one of the first to become an honorary alderman of KCC. His public sector work was not his only service to the community though; he was also a trustee at two local charities, including the Elizabeth Huggins Cottages Charity Trust.

Mr Gibson was a father of six and had 11 grandchildren.

Chief executive of Gravesham council, David Hughes, said: "He was most certainly one of life's true gentlemen.

"He will be sadly missed and fondly remembered for many years to come."

## Hospital trust faces manslaughter charge

A HOSPITAL trust has been charged with manslaughter over the death in 2012 of a mother during child birth at the Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury - two doctors working at the state-of-the-art hospital also face charges.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust has been charged with corporate manslaughter over the death of Frances Cappuccini.

The 30-year-old died after giving birth by emergency caesarean section on Tuesday, October 9, 2012.

Dr Nadeem Azeez, 52, formerly of Chestnut Avenue, Tunbridge Wells, and Dr Errol Cornish, 67, of Holmbury Park, Bromley, have also been charged with gross negligence manslaughter.

An international warrant has been issued for the arrest of Dr Azeez, who is believed to have left the country and returned to Pakistan.

The first hearing in the case is due to take place at Sevenoaks Magistrates' Court next week at 10am on Friday, May 1.

## Racers left seriously hurt in horror smash

TWO motorcyclists were left seriously injured after a horror crash during a race at Brands Hatch last weekend.

Jordy de Jonge, 17, from the Netherlands and James Puttrel, 25, from Hitchin, Hertfordshire, fell in the first lap of the National Superstock 600 race at the West Kingsdown circuit.

They both fell in an attempt to avoid other riders who had already crashed. Mr de Jonge suffered a serious head injury, while Mr Puttrel sustained injuries to his head, chest and limbs.

The race was halted immediately after the crash, with both riders being treated by medics on the track. They were then taken to the circuit's medical centre.

Mr de Jonge was flown to King's College Hospital by air ambulance, while Mr Puttrel was flown to St George's Hospital in Tooting.

Both continue to receive treatment for their injuries.

The race was part of the programme topped by the British Superbike races - one of the biggest crowd-pullers on the racing calendar.



# agenda

What will make next week's headlines...

## Warning over weekend rail engineering works

THOSE planning to travel by train next weekend are being urged to check before they set out with a host of engineering works due to take place over the early May bank holiday weekend.

Network Rail, which manages the rail infrastructure, will be conducting work which will mean

no trains to Charing Cross or Waterloo East over the weekend. There will also be some platform closures at Cannon Street and London Bridge on Saturday and Sunday. Services will be diverted to Victoria and Blackfriars.

Meanwhile, work to build Rochester's new station and



re-signalling the railway through Medway continues to make progress, with buses replacing trains between Meopham/Strood and Gillingham on all three days.

## Unions set for fun day to mark county's struggles

THE Kent Workers' Mayday Rally takes place on May 4 – an event which intends to celebrate the county's trade union struggles.

Held in the heart of the former coal communities in Aylesham, near Dover, the event is sponsored by all the big unions and will include a host

of political speakers, live music and food and drink.

Organiser Mike Sargent said: "We want to remind those who seek election that we, collectively, will be holding them to account for every vote they make, every cut and if they fail to serve their communities, then we will have them out."

## ...also

### Car parking made free

ASHFORD Borough Council has confirmed there will be free parking in selected council-owned car parks over the two May bank holiday weekends.

It applies to certain sites in Ashford and Tenterden and is hoped to swell visitors.

### Be alert to fraudsters

POLICE are warning those in and around Tonbridge and Malling to continue to be vigilant after a spate of phone calls from fraudsters attempting to obtain bank details from victims over the phone.

They normally pose as police officers.

### Paramount consultation

THE latest series of consultation events for the multi-billion pound London Paramount Resort on the Swanscombe peninsula get under way in Gravesend this week.

Starting on Wednesday, there will be 10 events across Gravesend and Dartford.

### Rochester Bridge talk

A LECTURE about the history and work of the Rochester Bridge Trust and its 600-year history, will take place in the Bridge Chapel on April 30 at 7pm.

The first Bridge Wardens' Lecture of the year can be booked on 01892 513033.

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**LENLEYS**



# Shining a light on Medway's eclectic musical melting pot

**Chris Murphy** speaks to author of book examining fascinating live music scene

**F**ROM the distinctive talents of the influential Billy Childish, to the more recent live music boom of venues like the 'Tap 'n' Tin' - pulling in performances from the likes of The Libertines and The Charlatans - Medway has long been home to a thriving music scene.

It may not quite have the production line of superstars of the likes of Manchester and Liverpool, but its industrial roots have, claim experts, forged a distinctive sound to an eclectic blend of musical talent.

And now a new book has delved into the Medway sound and its evolution. Written by music lover Stephen Morris, it examines the astonishing amount of talent to come out of the bedrooms, garages and clubs in the towns.

Charting the garage bands of the 1970s through punk and the alternative rock of the present day, Mr Morris unravels the tangled web of the towns' sonic DNA in the book, *Do It Yourself - A History of Music in Medway*.

He told us: "Music seems to ooze out of Medway everywhere you look - or listen. When I first moved to the

area I was amazed by just how many bands and artists came from what is actually quite a small geographical area."

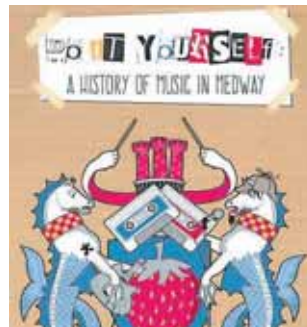
But not everyone is aware of what a pool of talent there is.

Mr Morris said: "People who have lived in the towns all their lives don't necessarily notice it. Some of those I spoke to while writing the book just assumed that everywhere was like it. But they're wrong."

"I grew up in Gloucestershire. And although there were bands there - there are bands everywhere - there was nothing like the number of creatively inclined people in the whole county to match what goes on in a small cluster of towns in the north of Kent."

"It was this incomer's view of what goes on in Medway that helped me understand that there was something very special going on in Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham. A lot of it is connected to Medway's status as a being a bit different from the rest of Kent."

"The county has an image for many - in the county itself and beyond - as



**NOTE:** Author Stephen Morris and his book on melodic Medway

the Garden of England. But Medway, with all its naval history and industry is anything but a garden. It's more like a workshop - the shed at the bottom of the garden where things get made and stuff gets done.

"That industriousness comes across in the music. People like Billy Childish weren't particularly bothered about getting a job at the dockyard with their school friends. But they became powerhouses in their own right, churning out record after record, performing at gig after gig. And they generally did it in a very independent fashion. Why bother waiting to get a manager or a record label

when you could just get on and do it yourself?"

Billy Childish is a prolific painter, author, poet, photographer, film maker, singer and guitarist whose musical expression has seen him dabble in everything from punk to blues, folk to rock n roll and plenty more besides.

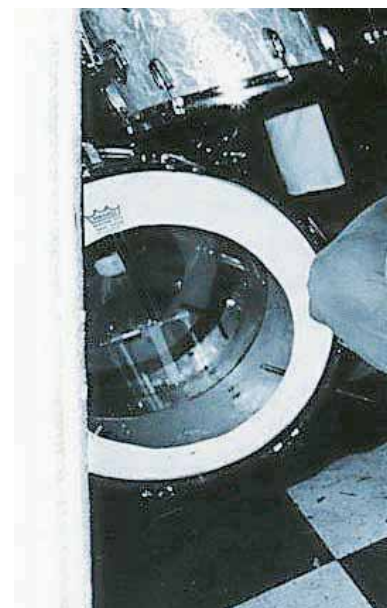
His music was acknowledged as inspirational by the likes of Nirvana's Kurt Cobain, Jack White from The White Stripes and Blur's Graham Coxon.

Adds the author: "And just as Medway is different from much of the rest of Kent, so Medway's music would be different. While the rest of the world

was getting into synthesisers and New Romanticism, the likes of The Milkshakes, one of Childish's first bands, and The Prisoners used a punk ethic to recreate the garage sounds of the 60s. Medway's musicians have been following their own stylistic whims ever since.

"Often Medway acts have referenced their home towns in their songs - more so, I think, than bands from other places."

"Bands and artists from The Milkshakes through to [male solo artist] Lupen Crook have used songs to document the kind of love-hate relationship you can only have with a place if



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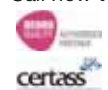
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**INFLUENTIAL:** Billy Childish. Picture: Masao Nakagami

you've grown up there. And the towns, with their connections to Dickens and oddball position as a post-industrial part of a garden county, have plenty for their locals to love and hate in equal measure. Often at the same time."

One backer of the book is Bob Collins from the band The Dentists. He said: "No-one's attempted it yet but a Medway rock family tree would be the most complex structure known to man. Forget the human genome - everyone in Medway is always in about three bands at once."

Mr Morris told us: "The more I found out about music in the Medway towns, the more fascinated I became with it. I wanted to know what made it tick. It didn't take long to establish that what has been going on is more complicated than a scene."

"In my book, I talk about there being a 'Medway music microclimate'. And I think that's broadly right."

Inside are dozens of exclusive interviews with everyone from Billy Childish to Lupen Crook to create the first definitive guide to Medway's rich musical landscape. It took three years to

complete.

He details busts-ups, rivalries and alliances that characterise this most interwoven of music scenes.

In addition it takes a look back at the live music scene at the Tap 'n' Tin venue in Chatham which was once so vibrant.

Amazingly, more than 200 singles, EPs and albums have come out of the towns since the mid-1970s.

**Do It Yourself - A History of Music in Medway is published by Cultured Llama and retails for £15.**



**REUNION:** The Claim hit the right notes



**HIT:** Singer songwriter Lupen Crook

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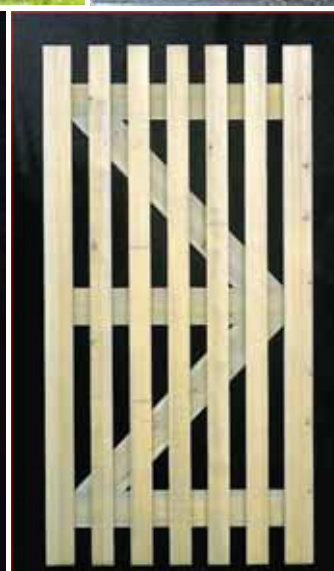




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**COST:** Situated in a prime spot on Whitstable sea front, the hut comes with surrounding land and is freehold - many huts are only leased out despite their price tag. Pic: CHRISTOPHER HODGSON

# Is this the most expensive beach hut ever sold along our coast?

It might only look like a glorified shed but, as **Chris Murphy** reports, this will set you back six figures

**I**T MAY not look much, but this is a wooden hut in demand. Priced at an eye-watering £120,000 it is no bigger than a garden shed and you're not allowed to stay in it during the hours of darkness.

It does, however, come with a little land and is right in the very heart of Whitstable's most popular stretch of beach.

But it comes at a cost which is still more expensive than a two-bedroom flat in Rochester or Dover or 12-acres of farmland in Dartford.

Perhaps most surprising is that the hut on Whitstable's Island Wall - which doesn't have any electricity - is already under offer and agents marketing the site hope to complete the sale soon.

Being sold through Tankerton-based agency Christopher Hodgson, the agents stress the price is being driven up by the freehold of the plot of land it sits on.

The hut sits between the Neptune pub on the beach and the popular Horsebridge development.

But soaring prices for beach huts in the town show little sign of slowing, with a number currently on the market for up to £40,000.

The agency said it was a unique opportunity to acquire a freehold plot of land comprising a beach hut with timber decking and barbecue area.

There is a prominent sea view to watch "the spectacular sunsets over Whitstable Bay and towards the Isle of Sheppey".

There are, however, strict restrictions on the use of beach huts - and additional costs.

The majority are council or privately owned sites which, when they do



**VIEW:** This could be yours for a mere £120,000

reach the market, normally are sold leasehold. Hence why the Island Wall hut commands such a staggering price.

Leasehold will command an additional annual rental charge.

Agents like Harvey Richards & West in the town say they don't see beach huts come on the market too often, but is currently selling six of them in Whitstable from £15,000 to £38,000.

Managing director Rory Patterson said the sales have been forced in some cases by rises in ground rents from those who own the ground freehold.

He said: "People love these because they can store all their beach equipment, barbecues, chairs and tables, and can be all set up within minutes of arrival.

"But there have been some serious hikes in the ground rent of late and a couple are being sold by families who wouldn't have sold had it not been for this. That is a shame.

"The council charges about £600 and the private companies are £1,800 a year, so that's an extra £100 a month going out of the bank account.

"If they are priced correctly, they will go, even if the ground rent is higher."

Canterbury City Council currently manages nearly 700 beach huts along Whitstable - many of them on Tankerton Slopes - and in Herne Bay.

When it created 13 new beach huts recently in Tankerton it put them on the market at just under £21,000.

However, the Island Wall hut still has a long way to go to before it could consider being crowned Britain's most expensive beach hut.

That goes to one at Mudeford Sandspit in Bournemouth. That went on the market for an eye-watering £270,000 before the owner decided to hold on to it. It was a beach hut like few others, however.

It came with a basement and utilities, and rare for the type of property, could be lived in for seven months of

## BEACH HUT HISTORY

The beach hut dates back to at least Victorian times when wheeled bathing boxes were prevalent.

From around 1862, these were used to literally wheel ladies to the edge of the water, so they could dip their toes in the gently lapping waves while retaining the modesty required of the time.

Of course, once it became obvious the sight of the odd ankle was not going to lead to the end of the world, women in swimsuits could walk freely on our beaches, condemning the bathing boxes to history.

But someone, and it's not clear who, saw the chance to capitalise on them. The boxes, which were also seen on beaches in Australia and France, grew and became semi-fixed structures.

While other nations simply forgot about these boxes, the British loved them so much the beach hut was born, and quickly became popular. They were regarded as holiday



homes for the toiling classes.

It wasn't until the 1930s that their image was altered and the likes of George V and Queen Mary spent the day at a beach hut in Sussex.

After the closure of all UK beaches during the Second World War, the hut enjoyed a major revival in the decades to come, but their popularity drove up prices. What was once the preserve of the working class, they became the exclusive property of those with pockets as deep as the oceans.

the year, sleeping five thanks to its mezzanine design.

It's our passion to sit beside the seaside that helps drive up the prices, says one Kent lease owner Sally Mumford.

She told us: "Depending on the location and if I had the money, I would definitely buy one freehold.

"The time you can stay in one is limited to daytime hours usually, but during those hours, you can enjoy a delightful time.

"There is a real and genuine community spirit among those who use beach huts. You get to know your

neighbours who share your passion for the beach hut.

"If you have children, others in your community will help look out for them, and you can share problems and maintenance. I personally love them - they are very British. I am not sure any other country has them, certainly not on our scale. Every good beach needs beach huts, but just like other properties, the value always depends on location and position.

"A front row beach hut on a nice beach will be more expensive than one three rows back."





**DETONATE:** The Army are no strangers to being called in to handle the vast number of bombs which are unearthed regularly across the county - the remnants of the Second World War

# A minefield of unexploded bombs

**Jamie Weir** takes a look at why Kent is littered with wartime explosives... but no-one knows just where

**'T'**HOUSANDS' of unexploded war time bombs litter the county, according to experts, meaning we could still be digging up the potentially deadly remains of the Second World War for decades to come.

But the chances of digging one up in your garden remain slim.

The issue of unexploded devices reared its head again in recent weeks when a massive 250kg bomb was discovered on a Bermondsey construction site.

It was carefully transported to a quarry on Grain where a controlled explosion – heard for miles around – was carried out.

But Kent remains littered with hidden devices.

The reason is simple... geography.

As Germany bombers swept into our skies, they would look to bomb strategic points in the county and we also suffered from bombs aimed at London falling inside our borders.

In addition, as Luftwaffe aircraft headed back from bombing missions further inland they would look to ditch any remaining explosives before crossing the Channel.

Many of the bombs dropped could penetrate up to 13 metres into the ground, and if they failed to explode, could sit undisturbed for decades.

And, perhaps more worryingly, no-one knows exactly where they are.

An Army spokesman told KoS: "It's very difficult for us to pinpoint any places in particular where a bomb might be found.

"They could be found in a person's

back garden, or a construction site; almost anywhere around the county.

"What we can say is that Kent has a high percentage of unexploded ordnance in comparison to other areas of the country."

Michael Fellows is a former Navy diver, with experience of clearing bombs on land and in the sea. He has, in the past, worked to remove anti-invasion defences on Manston Airport's runway; in that case, the munitions were 'pipe bombs' which had been laid to destroy the airfield if the area was invaded.

He told KoS: "East Kent was called Hell Fire Corner during the war for a good reason. Most planes on bombing runs from France would make their way over the county. Some of them were shot down, with their loads sometimes scattering. Others would dump bombs as they flew over the county, and yet more would drop bombs on defensive positions. A huge number of V1 and V2 rockets also came over Kent. Some of them were duds and others were shot down by defences in Kent. We have worked on a few of them after they were discovered."

It wasn't just the threat from above which saw huge numbers of explosives dumped on the county – the coast is positively heaving with unexploded bombs of one type or another.

Simon Cooke, a former major with the Royal Engineers is the managing director at 6 Alpha Associates. The organisation offers developers help finding and managing the risk of unexploded ordnance – or UXOs in industry parlance.

He told KoS the group had worked



**EXPERT:** Simon Cooke

on a number of projects across the county, and that there was always a risk.

He said: "Most of the UXOs we uncover are there because of the world wars. Typically, around 10 per cent of the devices which were dropped, or launched, did not go off. When you consider that millions and millions of bombs, and sea mines were deployed around the south east of the country, that indicates the levels of unexploded ordnance.

"Most of our work is to do with off-shore threats, as during the Second World War, a huge amount of ordnance was placed into the sea around the UK to protect it from invasion."

Many of those sea mines, now sunk or, in some rare cases, still floating, says Mr Cooke, could do significant damage.

"They were designed to sink warships," explains Mr Cooke.

He continued: "If one of them were to go off, it could do a tremendous

amount of damage to any commercial vessel nearby, and if it were close enough, it could quite easily sink it."

There are not only plenty of sea mines floating around off the coast; there are also many other munitions in our seas.

The SS Richard Montgomery, a cargo ship which sank near Sheppey, was carrying 6,127 tons of munitions when it ran aground on a sandbank. It is now sat just off Sheerness in shallow water, its masts still poking out from the sea.

Experts have frequently warned that huge amounts of munitions remain onboard – the Maritime and Coastguard Agency wrote a report which estimated the wreck still held 1,500 tons of high explosives – with the potential to do significant damage to Sheerness.

Mr Fellows told KoS: "What the Montgomery really needs is a good and comprehensive survey. We need to find out if it is spilling its load of munitions, or if they're remaining in the ship.

"Currently it isn't likely to be too dangerous. The real danger would come if the munitions are being moved, or disturbed, and that's exactly why we need to find out exactly what is happening down there."

That, it seems, is the key issue. If an unexploded bomb is simply left to its own devices, it is unlikely to spontaneously explode. The big problem comes when they are exposed.

Much of the time, this happens as a result of excavation with heavy machinery which can give them a solid bang.

Mr Cooke said: "Most of these muni-

tions are highly unlikely to go off of their own volition. The vast majority of them require a fairly hard knock of sorts to trigger them. In some senses, they aren't extremely dangerous when they've simply been left, but on a construction site, it is far better to know where they could potentially be before any digging starts."

Once found, the Army are normally called into action.

The Army spokesman told KoS: "The processes of how bomb disposal team's deal with unexploded ordnance varies widely depending on what is found. The type, size and condition of the munition all has to be taken into account.

"Its location is also important, and safety is always a priority. In Bermondsey, we used two specialist teams in order to speed the process up. That was because it was an extremely busy part of London, and we wanted to make sure people could get back to life as normal as quickly as possible."

While it may be good to keep the country moving, it seems that bombs are likely to be found for some years to come.

Mr Fellows, whose company is gearing up to start work looking for unexploded ordnance at Lydd Airport, told KoS he's working flat out right now.

He said: "We have years of work left, even if we work constantly. We're always busy, and we will be for some time to come. On one site, we found 735 separate bombs and there are many more to find. One thing which is concerning, is that many of them get more volatile with age. The sooner they are found, the better."



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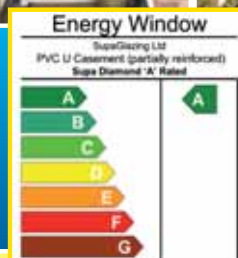
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# Has a power to save your local proved to pack little real clout?

It was supposed to give local communities the power to stop the closure of their local to make way for supermarkets or housing. But so far, as **Andrew Hirst** reports, the legislation may be there but few communities are using it...

**A** SCHEME hailed by government as the saviour of many local pubs has been called into question after an investigation found no unqualified examples of its success in Kent since being introduced almost four years ago.

The Government's Assets of Community Value (ACV) scheme was introduced as part of the 2011 Localism Act to help communities protect their pubs, or other services, from closure.

Around 600 pubs have been registered as ACVs nationally including at least 17 in Kent.

Pubs minister Kris Hopkins said last month the scheme helped communities "protect their beloved pubs from sell-off" and called on people to celebrate the first ever Community Pubs Day by considering whether they might want to "list their local".

But while more than a dozen Kent communities have registered their pubs, the scheme has failed to prevent several closures, including The Medway Queen in Chatham, which is now a Morrison's, and the Charity Inn in Woodnesborough, near Sandwich.

The scheme means community groups or parish councils that register their pubs are entitled to a six month "moratorium of sale" if the owner chooses to sell it, providing time to raise funds and make a bid of their own.

Campaigners are now hoping new legislation introduced on April 6, which means ACVs are no longer subject to permitted development rights and therefore cannot be converted, or demolished without planning permission, may offer greater protection and increase the effectiveness of the measure.

The Plunkett Foundation, which has supported community-run shop schemes in Kent as part of its aims to help people in rural areas, has welcomed the new measures.

Mike Perry, head of development and policy at Plunkett, said: "This means communities will have a better chance of saving their local pub as a co-operative, rather than a pub they have listed being converted to shops, offices, restaurants or even in some cases demolished."

Mr Perry called for ACV to be further strengthened by lengthening the moratorium period to give communities more time to raise the funding.

Ward councillor Sam Craven, who campaigned to save The Medway Queen, said it was unfortunate the new legislation had arrived too late for that pub, but hoped it would benefit other communities.

"It's horrible that we are losing everything to the big corporations, but hopefully this will have a positive impact for others going forward," she added.

The Charity Inn in Woodnesborough closed down, despite being registered, with no immediate prospects of reopening.

Sarah Wells, clerk at Woodnesborough Parish Council, which nominated the pub as an asset, said it had been put up for auction by the pub's mortgage company, which meant the ACV status didn't apply. It was later taken off the market, but remains closed.

"It seems the legislation has not got any teeth," she said.

"It all appeared good on paper until we actually tried to use it."

The Bricklayers Arms in Shepherdswell, near Dover, has also been put up for sale, despite being registered an ACV.

Barry Crush, chairman of Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council, which made the nomination, said it was "disappointing" the pub was being sold, however he still support-

Continues on page 16

## WARNING OVER PERILS OF BEING AN ACV

BRIGID Simmonds, chief executive of the Beer and Drinks Association, said she approved of the scheme's ability to help communities protect their local pubs but also said there were some that could not be saved.

"I want to see as many pubs open as possible, which is why we campaign so hard for lower taxes and reduced red tape for Britain's pubs," she said.

"But in the present climate, there will still be cases where a pub isn't viable

or of genuine community value, and where making it an ACV won't help it to become so.

"There is also a danger that keeping a barely viable pub open puts a nearby pub in danger of closing, too."

Ms Simmonds added that empty buildings "are often a blight on an area" and the restrictions of ACV can devalue premises or make it difficult for the owners to sell.



## CAMRA'S 'HOW TO...' GUIDE

THE Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) has issued advice to communities seeking protection for their pubs under the scheme.

Interested parties are recommended to approach their town or parish councils to see if they can form the nominating group on the community's behalf.

Communities can also create their own group to nominate the pub, with a name referencing their campaign.

Nomination forms should be available for download from the relevant local authority's website. People filling in the form are advised to include as much detail as possible as to why the pub

should be classified as a community asset, demonstrating how it furthers the community's social well-being and may continue to do so.

At least 21 members of the local community must demonstrate their support for the nomination by giving their signature to the scheme.

Further advice on what details to include in the nomination and where to send the completed form can be found on the relevant local authority's website.

■ CAMRA's planning department also offers additional support. Email [acv@camra.org.uk](mailto:acv@camra.org.uk) or call 01727 337851.



**PROTECTED?** The Five Bells in Eastry, inset, is one of a number of Kent pubs which have been registered as an ACV



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**SHUT:** No one came to the rescue of the Royal Oak in Pembury after it was forced to close its doors

ed the principles of the scheme.

"If the scheme wasn't available there would have been no opportunities for groups to come forward and get the six month moratorium period," he said.

The Royal Oak in Pembury has also remained closed despite receiving ACV status.

Paul Roberts, of the Save The Royal Oak Pembury campaign group, said the ACV nomination was made after the pub was sold to someone who sought permission to convert it into housing.

A petition calling for it to be saved was signed by around 1,000 people but it has yet to reopen.

Mr Roberts said he did not expect the community to buy the pub, even with ACV status. However he said it helped to raise awareness and helped deter buyers from redeveloping it.

He also welcomed the new measures that remove the permitted development rights from ACVs, which he had pressed for prior to their arrival earlier this month.

Several pubs registered as assets by the community were saved

through other means.

The Walnut Tree in Loose was registered as an asset over fears that it could be sold for development. But despite gaining ACV status, it was the unrelated arrival of new landlords Carole Chapman and Cliff Burke that saved the pub.

Ms Chapman said the scheme had still been worthwhile in giving added protection, though it was difficult to know whether the community would have been able to make a successful purchase bid.

Richard Kemp, who led the com-

## SO, JUST WHAT EXACTLY IS AN 'ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE'?

THE aim on an 'Asset of Community Value' (ACV) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and is designed to give local populations more control over key community buildings and sites they believe essential to the make-up of where they live.

However, it comes with few guarantees and offers little real power.

Although individuals cannot nominate an ACV, parish councils or groups with a connection with the community can.

If the nomination is accepted, local groups will be given time to come up with a bid for the asset when it is sold.

However, that right to bid only applies when an asset's owner decides to dispose of it. There is

no compulsion on the owner to sell it.

Nor does the scheme give first refusal to the community group; and it is not a community right to buy the asset, just to bid.

This means that the local community bid may not be the successful one.

Certain types of land, most notably residential property, are exempt from being placed on the register.

Owners of property placed on the register may appeal against its listing and can claim compensation if they can demonstrate its value has been reduced.

Also, certain types of transfer of land or assets do not count as disposal for the purposes of the legislation.

munity bid, said ACV status gave the regulars "thinking time" to have a "fighting chance".

The Royal Oak in Tunbridge Wells was also registered out of concerns over its possible sale to developers. However it was bought by an individual, not related to the ACV bid, who retained it as a pub.

Landlady Yvonne Blanche said that although the new owner was separate from the community campaign to save the pub, she was "eternally grateful" to those involved, and said it would have given "huge protection".

Other pubs, such as the George Inn at Newnham; Five Bells at

Eastry and Bell Inn at Shepherdswell, were registered as ACVs despite there being no immediate threat of closure.

Sue Gunner, chairman for Newnham Parish Council, which registered the George Inn, said it was a "belt and braces" approach.

Kae Mendham, regional director for Kent CAMRA, said there were no examples in the county where the community had rallied around to buy their local. However, she said Kent was leading the way in other schemes, such as "micropubs" – small freehouses that serve mainly cask ales and shun all forms of electronic entertainment.

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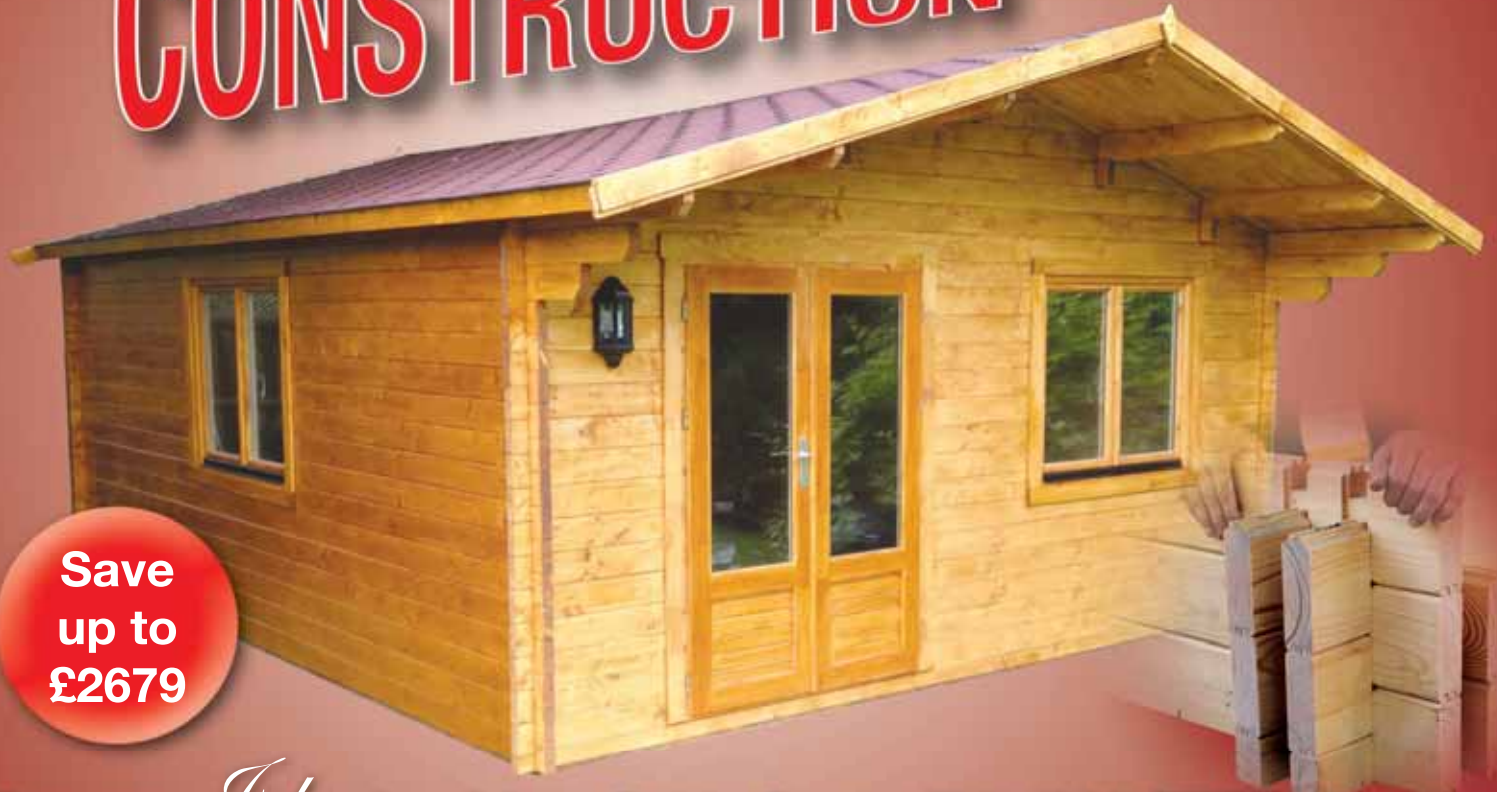
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## CANDIDATES

### Full list of confirmed candidates:

Zebadiah Abu-Obadiah  
(Al-Zebabist Nation of Ooog)  
**Nigel Aske** (We are the Reality Party)  
Ruth Bailey (Manston Airport Independent Party)  
**Grahame Birchall** (Party for a United Thanet)  
Ian Driver (Green)  
**Nigel Farage** (Ukip)  
Craig Mackinlay (Cons)  
**Dean McCastree** (Ind)  
Al Murray (Fukp)  
**Will Scobie** (Lab)  
Russ Timpson (Lib Dem)

# All eyes on Farage in boom or bust scrap

**Jamie Weir** concludes our complete constituency guide

**A**T EVERY general election this is one seat which captures the imagination: which becomes caught like a rabbit in the nation's headlights.

Rarely, it must be said, is that ever in Kent. After all, this county is, more often than not, drenched in the deep blue of the Conservatives, with only the occasional splash of Labour red if the party is in the ascendancy.

So it is perhaps ironic that it is the colour combination of the two which has dripped a little purple on the Kent landscape - firstly with Mark Reckless' win at the Rochester and Strood by-election last November and now with its most realistic chance of another in South Thanet.

Realistic because the one undisputed success story of Ukip - its leader Nigel Farage - is standing there. And if that was not enough to excite the political pundits who have charted the party's rise in recent years (and apparent stalling now - see page 22) - Mr Farage has suggested he will have to quit as leader should he fail to be returned to Westminster.

So, you'd think, a straight two-

horse race with the Tory candidate then? Not so. Because it's easy to forget that while Laura Sandys holds this seat with a comfortable 7,617 majority (she opted to not defend it this time around for personal reasons), Labour were once kings of the castle - with former minister in the Tony Blair government, Dr Stephen Ladyman, the incumbent.

Things have moved on since then, of course, but while the parties to the right of centre battle it out, that Tory majority is eroded. And while the polls suggest Mr Farage or the Tories will emergent triumphant, a number are saying Will Scobie, the Labour candidate could surprise everyone and snatch it instead.

By the time you've thrown in some odd smaller party candidates - among them comic Al Murray's Pub Landlord character standing for the Free United Kingdom Party (FUKP - see what he did there?) and you have a sure fire recipe for political fascination.

Conservative candidate Craig Mackinlay has certainly had his fair share of big name backers in recent weeks (see page 24) but he knows more than most the need to win here.

Having lost to Ann Barnes in the race to be Kent's first police and crime commissioner, he knows two straight high profile defeats may not provide the platform for a third.

The pressure, then, is on.

Of course, with Ukip, looking at past general election results is somewhat counterproductive. After all, the party today is a very different beast than in previous polls. But it is worth glancing back just to gauge how far Nigel Farage has come. In 2005 he stood for the seat and polled just five per cent.

The Tories know, however, they could not only hold this seat, but skewer their nemesis' political ambition too. Mr Farage says this shows just how fearful the Conservative Party is of him. He told KoS: "They are running scared of Ukip."

"The fact the Conservatives are sending so many big guns down to the seat speaks volumes about what they think."

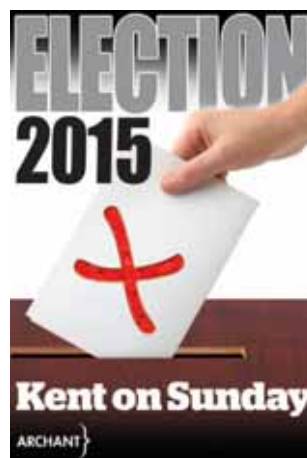
That is something Mr Mackinlay disputes, saying the big names show that South Thanet will not be ignored if the Conservatives remain in power.

He told KoS: "The party support me, and also the people of South Thanet. We aren't the end of Kent; this area is thought of highly by ministers in Government who want to help bring growth, jobs and success."

Labour's Will Scobie (left) may not have had the focus of his opponents... but as a genuine local candidate, he does pack considerable credibility.

He said: "People in this area are sick and tired of being taken for a ride. They want a proper, local constituency MP who knows the area, and is willing to fight for them and their issues on the national stage."

Mr Farage added: "On a national



level, as Ukip leader I am able to bring much more attention to the area.

"I will be able to get Government to focus on South Thanet, which is almost certain to be positive for the area."

One of those to take aim at the Ukip leader is Mr Scobie, who told KoS that even now, during the campaign, he has been unwilling to engage with South Thanet's electorate.

He said: "Mr Farage prefers to hide in ticket-only 'public meetings' where the audience has been vetted to ensure only Ukip supporters can get close to him."

"That isn't connecting with local people, and it's not how politics should be done. If he were to get elected, is that how he would treat his constituents; hiding when he doesn't like their views?"

It does seem to be the case that Mr Farage has failed to attend electoral hustings events in the constituency with even the Bishop of Dover saying he was 'disappointed' the Ukip leader wouldn't attend one he had organised.

But Mr Farage says that he has been highly visible during the election campaign, pointing to the many ticketed meetings he has held. As a party leader of a sometimes controversial party, he also has security issues to consider. He rarely travels light.

In fact, the feverish campaigning from all three main parties have left pollsters placing Labour, the Conservatives and Ukip within a tight two point gap. All other parties - and there are 11 in total - have been rele-

## PREVIOUS RESULTS

### Past general election results for South Thanet:

#### 2010

Laura Sandys (Con) 22,043 (48%)  
Stephen Ladyman (Lab) 14,426 (31.4%)  
Peter Bucklitsch (Lib Dem) 6,935 (15.1%)  
Trevor Shonk (Ukip) 2,529 (5.5%)  
Majority: 7,617 (16.6%)

#### 2005

Stephen Ladyman (Lab) 16,660 (40.4%)  
Mark MacGregor (Con) 15,996 (38.8%)  
Guy Voizey (Lib Dem) 5,431 (13.2%)  
Nigel Farage (Ukip) 2,079 (5%)  
Howard Green (Green) 888 (2.2%)  
Maude Kinsella (Ind) 188 (0.5%)  
Majority: 664 (1.6%)

**FARAGE:**  
The campaign smile





gated to also-rans.

Mr Scobie said he believed the election would be tight for the big three, telling KoS that he could pick up a chunk of the Conservative vote.

He said: "The Conservative candidate is nothing more than a Ukip-lite candidate and he isn't proving able to pick up Ukip votes. He also fails to unite the local anti-Ukip vote, whereas I can. His share of the vote could also get eaten into by Ukip, which looks likely to benefit me."

Mr Scobie's big local difference is his stance on Manston Airport - unconvinced it has a compelling enough business case to re-open yet. Mr Farage and Mr Mackinlay, on the other hand are insisting it is resurrected.

Single issue candidate Ruth Bailey, who is standing for the Manston Airport Independent Party says it is a huge issue for the local area, saying that she wants to keep it in focus.

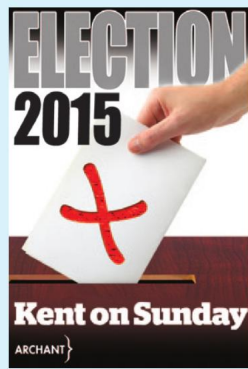
She told KoS she knew she was 'highly unlikely' to win the seat, but said she wanted to stand to push the airport agenda.

"I want to be a thorn in the side of the other candidates to make sure Manston stands front and centre of their election promises," explained Mrs Bailey.

As for comedian Al Murray's Pub Landlord? He quipped: "What's quite clear is local issues matter to people enormously, the council, Manston, Ramsgate port, unemployment. That's why exactly what South Thanet needs is a candidate using it as a staging post for national ambitions. Sorry, I mean doesn't need."

Or, of course, there's the Prophet Zebadiah Abu-Obadiah standing for the

## KOS PREDICTS...



There is no doubt about it, South Thanet will be the one to watch in Kent, and indeed, the UK.

What's more, it is that rarest of things in Kent, a genuine seat just too close to call.

One thing is sure though. Not long ago Nigel Farage was expected to walk this. But both Labour and the Conservatives have come out fighting.

This could prove to be a real nailbiter.

Al-Zebab Nation of OOOG - his main fight will be for his deposit back. Probably.

He said: "The holy land of Cliftonville is what this party is about, what I am about. It's the cultural diversity which is there. That's what I believe in. "I know we will win; it has been prophesised."

So there you have it. Simple.

# Will austerity help Labour to victory?

By Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

**T**HE seat of Erith and Thamesmead has only ever known one colour.

Since its creation in 1997 it has been through two MPs - but both from the same party.

Labour's John Austin reigned from its inception until opting to step down ahead of the 2010 election. Since then, Theresa Pearce has picked up the torch and will be defending her seat.

And while it seems unlikely she will



**LABOUR:**  
Theresa Pearce

## CANDIDATES

### Full list of confirmed candidates:

Sidney Cordle (Christian Peoples)

Anna Firth (Con)

Ann Garrett (Green)

Simon Waddington (Lib Dem)

Ronnie Johnson (Ukip)

let it slip from his grasp on May 7, her majority is far from big enough to ensure restful slumber over the coming two weeks.

The constituency itself was amalgamated from chunks of the former Woolwich and Erith and Crayford seats, which were split up following a boundary review.

Mr Austin, the Woolwich MP, shifted over and secured another term.

However, the years have not been kind to Labour since it swept to power in 1997 under the New Labour banner waved with such enthusiasm by Tony Blair.

For that first outing, Mr Austin romped to Westminster with a comfortable 17,424 majority.

But over the years, that has dwindled.

In 2010 - the first for Theresa Pearce

- the number was just 5,703. It's a figure which makes a swing to the Right entirely plausible, and the kind of statistic to make most opposition candidates optimistic about their chances. Conservative Party candidate Anna Firth is no different.

"I'm confident in what I can do for people here, and what I can deliver," explains Mrs Firth.

She continued: "There's all to play for here as the seat has been swinging to us since its creation."

"I'm getting good feedback from people when I'm out, but I'm certainly not taking the voters for granted."

Topics such as housing, growth and jobs are, as in most areas in the south east and beyond, high on the political agenda.

One particular issue which impacts on voters in the area is likely to be transport into central London with almost 60 per cent of people in the area taking the daily commute.

Transport is high up Mrs Firth's list of pledges to the electorate.

She told KoS: "It's a disgrace that rail fares recently rose by two per cent, while service for commuters into London Bridge has fallen through the floor."

"I intend to continue lobbying the rail minister for a 50 per cent rebate on season tickets and a complete freeze on

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## KOS PREDICTS...

WILL people vote on national issues, or on local issues? That's the question to ponder for Erith and Thamesmead.

If local, then you can't help thinking the slim majority which Labour has will falter, allowing the Conservatives to take the seat.

If austerity Britain is what gets voters going, it could be Labour. This will go down to the wire.



rail fares until the building work is completed."

Trains are also on Labour candidate Theresa Pearce's hit list. She told KoS that train operator Southeastern was "at fault" and she would keep pressure on them to invest in their customers.

One key transport issue, says Mrs Firth, is that it has lacked the investment it needs to grow.

She told KoS the area's fortunes could be revived if transport were made a bigger priority.

She said: "One of my key priorities is to lobby for Crossrail to be extended to the area so that it benefits the many, not the few. Making Erith and Thamesmead more accessible to central London will help bring jobs, investment and growth to the area, and that's something I'm passionate about."

That's something Liberal Democrat candidate, Simon Waddington appears to agree with, saying the area needs 'sustainable economic growth'.

And growth will be needed, as while parts of the constituency are relatively affluent, there are pockets of serious

**GROWTH:** Regeneration could be a key issue in the forthcoming general election

deprivation.

Theresa Pearce believes the austerity approach of the Coalition government will win her support. She explained: "What began as a policy of welfare reform has started to affect more and more people.

"Many public sector workers have lost their jobs as a result of cuts, while

firefighters have seen their pension terms changed for the worse. So many people have been impacted that there is quite a large group who want to vote against this Government."

Like most south London seats, housing is also uppermost in the minds of prospective MPs - though Green Party candidate Ann Garrett said that it

must be 'opposed on green sites'.

Ms Pearce said: "Even though housing is cheaper here than much of London, it's still out of most people's reach.

It's changing the dynamics of the area; we used to be a 'settled' area, but now we're seeing a much more transient population. It's a huge issue here."

## PREVIOUS RESULTS

### Past general election results for Erith and Thamesmead: 2010

Teresa Pearce (Lab) 19,068 (44.9%)  
Colin Bloom (Cons) 13,365 (31.5%)  
Alex Cunliffe (Lib Dem) 5,116 (12.0%)  
Kevin Saunders (BNP) 2,184 (5.1%)  
Pamela Perrin (Ukip) 1,139 (2.7%)  
Laurence Williams (Eng Dem) 465 (1.1%)  
Abbey Akinoshun (Ind) 438 (1.0%)  
Sidney Cordle (Christian Peoples) 379 (0.9%)  
Marek Powley (Green) 322 (0.8%)  
Majority: 5,703 (13.4%)

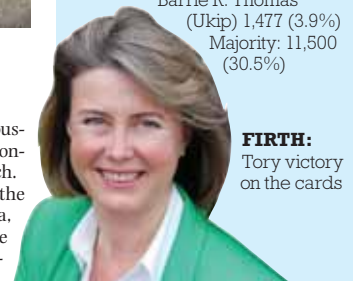
### 2005

John Austin (Lab) 20,483 (54.4%)  
Chris R. Bromby (Con) 8,983 (23.9%)  
Steven T. Toole (Lib Dem) 5,088 (13.5%)  
Brian Ravenscroft (BNP) 1,620 (4.3%)

Barrie R. Thomas (Ukip) 1,477 (3.9%)  
Majority: 11,500 (30.5%)

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# 'People tend to come back to the devil they know' – and it's not Ukip

As academics predict Ukip will fair poorly on May 7, **Sarah Linney** asks if the wheels have come off...

SIX months ago, it would have been easy to imagine the 'earthquake' predicted by Nigel Farage for his fast-rising Ukip would shake the foundations of Westminster post May 8. The reality, however, is likely to be rather different. Less earthquake, more slight tremor. Potentially.

Because last week, the Election Forecast website, run by a trio of political experts from the universities of Durham, East Anglia and the London School of Economic, predicted Ukip would have just one seat in Westminster after the general election – and it would belong to hugely popular Clacton MP Douglas Carswell.

Ukip wouldn't take Thanet, it would lose Rochester and Strood, and it wouldn't take Thurrock or any of the other seats where it might have thought they had a fighting chance, the academics said.

In fact, they have Ukip down to come third in South Thanet, winning just 25 per cent of the vote, with Tory Craig Mackinlay first on 36 per cent and Labour's Will Scobie on 28 per cent. Thurrock, they say, is a more likely Ukip winner – but still won't happen.

So what's going on? Have the

wheels on the once runaway Ukip bus, drenched by a wave of optimism following the high-profile defections of Mark Reckless and Douglas Carswell six months ago, come off?

According to Nigel Farage, you will not be surprised to learn, that's far from the case.

"These academics are hopelessly out of kilter," he said. "I feel confident but not complacent."

But Chris Hanretty, reader in politics at the University of East Anglia and one of the three men behind the site, says this is actually quite normal.

"It's generally true that the polls four or five months out, or even a month out, exaggerate change," he said.

"In the 1983 election, the SDP were going to prepare for government, but the polls misled us. In 2010 we had Cleggmania and the Lib Dems were going to be on 30 per cent of the vote with 80 to 100 seats.

"It's hard for any party to manage a breakthrough. People tend to re-evaluate closer to the election and come back to the devil they know.

"People know more or less who has a decent chance of winning in their seat and for many people that's a can-

didate from one of the top two parties. So they ask themselves; what are the chances that their vote will elect a Ukip candidate?"

However, he sounded a note of caution when it came to his own model.

"This is a statistical model – it doesn't know who the candidates are, what kind of charisma they have, or their personal profile. There are unquantifiables," Dr Hanretty said.

"And Ukip's performance is uncertain in a way that is very difficult to model. Because the party has such a limited record in parliamentary elections, it is difficult to predict where they will perform well."

Steve Ladyman was the Labour MP for South Thanet from 1997 until 2010. He stood against Mr Farage in 2005, when the latter polled five per cent of the vote.

He told KoS this week: "My feeling, particularly in South Thanet, is that when people start looking seriously at the issues, and taking a serious vote about a serious MP to be part of a serious government, they will see Ukip doesn't have the answers to the issues in this part of Kent.

"Being part of the European Union has benefited South Thanet. The



**FORCE:** SNP's Nicola Sturgeon



**HOPE:** Ex MP Dr Stephen Ladyman

Thanet university campus, the western marina in Ramsgate, the business parks that have provided jobs for a lot of people, even the harbour access road are all only there because of European money."

According to John Fitzgibbon, lecturer in politics and international relations at Canterbury Christ Church University, it is about something even more specific than that.

"What's killed Ukip is that it's now about Cameron vs Miliband for prime

minister," Dr Fitzgibbon said.

"In Rochester and Strood, for example, people are not voting for Kelly Tolhurst, they are voting for David Cameron.

"The debate has also changed. It's become very much about the NHS and the cost of living, and not focused so much on immigration.

"Ukip might win two or three seats, but if they get six it will be a very bad day for the Conservatives. Farage has a chance in Thanet – but it's absolute-

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**FALLING?** Latest polls suggest earlier beliefs that Nigel Farage's Ukip would scoop a host of seats on May 7, may yet prove premature

ly fascinating, as a few weeks ago it looked like he had it."

Dr Hanretty even sees Ukip coming third in Rochester and Strood, predicting that the only Kent seat where they will come second is Folkestone and Hythe.

Mr Ladyman, however, is more op-

timistic, and believes they could help nudge Labour into first place in several Kent seats.

"I think Ukip will poll enough votes to cause upsets. They will come second in Rochester and Strood," Mr Ladyman said. "The polling suggests Labour are doing quite well in some

seats, and I think the Ukip effect will probably help us. I would be quite surprised if we didn't win back some of the seats we held before 2010.

"The seats around the Medway towns might well come back to Labour, and I would be very hopeful that we would take Dover."

Unfortunate cases like those of Janice Atkinson – the south east MEP and former Shepway prospective parliamentary candidate who was ejected from Ukip over an expenses claim – and Rozanne Duncan, who was caught on camera saying she didn't like "negroes", do nothing

to further the party's image.

"It's not the fact that she says all these nasty things, it's the amateurishness of it," Dr Fitzgibbon said.

"People are continually getting kicked out and Farage is having to apologise. There is no doubting Farage's star quality, but the whole party is based on him. They are in a lot of trouble if he doesn't win South Thanet, because he can't come back again.

"But if Douglas Carswell stands against Farage for the leadership, he will take Ukip in a new direction: one of libertarianism, Euroscepticism and reducing taxes, with less of the nasty element. Farage will be a spent force, but we might see a new Ukip."

For those who wish Ukip success not out of a political affinity, but merely a desire to see someone break into the Tory-Labour hegemony, a Ukip routing would be depressing.

But Dr Fitzgibbon says there is light at the end of the tunnel – albeit north of the border.

"The Scottish National Party are offering a different type of politics and a very different message," he said.

"They are led by a woman who didn't go to some fancy school, and they are very left wing, so they have changed the debate, making Farage look really different from everyone else. Labour could have been moving towards majority territory, but they won't now. The SNP have changed the game, and different areas in Britain are now saying they are sick of Westminster too.

"It's a good thing. The two main parties can't take anything for granted any more – they have to fight for everything. The people are speaking, they want change, and there's nothing the big parties can do about it."

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**UNLEASHED:** Mayor of London Boris Johnson joins the campaign trail with Tory Craig Mackinlay in Ramsgate this week. Picture: ALEX LISTER

# Finally... Boris joins the big fight

**By Jamie Weir**

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

**T**HE debate dominating much of the chat among the political observers this week was just what took so long?

Just why did it take until just two weeks before we head to the polls for the Conservative to unleash Boris?

But on Tuesday morning, on a warm and sunny Ramsgate seafront, Boris Johnson emerged blinking in the light and the photogra-

phers' lenses into the heat of battle in a seat which the Tories are clearly throwing the kitchen sink at.

South Thanet, very much up for grabs after Tory incumbent Laura Sandys announced she was stepping down, is not just a seat which they could lose to Ukip, but if they were to cling on to could deliver the fatal blow to their number one enemy.

Win South Thanet, and they could slay the Nigel Farage dragon. Mr Farage has, after all, intimated he will quit as party leader if he fails to get elected - a move most see as spell-

ing the end of Ukip as a political force.

So in the last two weeks we have seen home secretary Theresa May, former leaders William Hague and Iain Duncan Smith and then the Mayor of London descend on the constituency.

He joined Conservative candidate Craig Mackinlay on a walk about that became more media scrum than ability to meet and greet the people. But it was only ever going to be that way.

Mr Johnson is something of a

stranger to these parts. His determination to build an airport in the Thames Estuary ensured few would welcome him. But, in movie parlance, he remains big box office and his visit will have underlined once and for all how the Tories want to keep this seat blue, and rid themselves of the charismatic Mr Farage.

The polls put Ukip, the Tories and Labour - represented by the fresh-faced Will Scobie - all within a few points of one another in the race to land the constituency in what is potentially the most fascinating

seat to be contested this year.

Speaking to KoS and other reporters at the event, Mr Johnson said: "I profoundly hope that Mr Farage doesn't get in. If he did, all it would do is give the Labour Party, together with the SNP, the boost they may need to form a government. That would mean a real threat to the UK, so everybody campaigning for Ukip should realise they're in danger of creating the former United Kingdom."

It is, surely, only a matter of time before David Cameron adds the title of prime minister to Mr Mackinlay's visitors' book.

Last weekend, Mr Cameron mingled with the crowds at the colourful Vaisakhi festival in Gravesend - an annual Sikh festival which sees thousands take to the streets. In line with tradition, the couple wore brightly coloured clothes, with Mr Cameron donning an orange headscarf.

Joined by his wife Samantha, the PM addressed members of the congregation inside the Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara temple in Saddington Street, around which the celebration centred.

It was Mr Cameron's first visit to the county - but is unlikely to be the last.

Not only does it seem inevitable he will head to South Thanet soon, but he's likely to visit Rochester and Strood as well in a bid to win back the seat the defecting Mark Reckless snapped up for Ukip last November.



**POPULAR:** William Hague joins in too  
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“ I started running to train for the British London 10k in 2013 and never dreamt that I would be given the opportunity to run the London Marathon ”

Sheila Vickers, is running for Team Diabetes UK

# Taking on marathon challenge

Hundreds from across county set to tackle the London Marathon for charity, writes **Molly Kersey...**

**H**UNDREDS of runners from the county will be seeking to complete one of the world's most celebrated mass sporting events this weekend as a mass of multi-coloured competitors take to the streets for the London Marathon.

Now in its 35th year, the marathon raises millions of pounds for good causes – amassing some £450m since its creation in 1981.

What's more, thousands of people from Kent are set to take a trip into the capital to line the route and cheer on the runners as they make their way along the gruelling 26-mile route.

Among those taking part will be siblings Jo Gunne and Suzy Tigwell, from Deal. They will be raising money for Barnardo's – the charity that gave their relatives a home when they found themselves on the street with nowhere to go.

Ms Gunne, 41, said: "My father-in-law's mother was made homeless with two young children.

"She worked as a Barnardo's matron and thankfully the charity took them all in and gave them a roof over their heads.

"My father-in-law Nick has very fond memories of growing up in the children's home and his mum was a life-long Barnardo's supporter until she died, aged 99, last year."

Maidstone mother Sheila Vickers is running in memory of her son Andrew, who died from Diabetes-related complications.

She has joined Team Diabetes UK, calling exercise her "salvation" as she dealt with her heartbreaking loss.

"Andrew was very sporty and a great inspiration who never let his dia-

betes stop him doing anything," she said.

"Since his death in 2010 after experiencing a severe hypo [a drop in blood glucose levels], exercise had been my salvation.

"I started running to train for the British London 10k in 2013 and never dreamt that I would be given the opportunity to run the London Marathon.

"I am now a personal trainer to help other people."

She added: "Diabetes UK was a great support when Andrew was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes aged 13 in 2000, so I would like to give something back to the charity that helped us during some difficult times."

Megan Warwick, whose father needed to have life saving surgery to treat an inherited heart disease, is hoping to raise awareness of his condition by running.

The 28-year-old, from Dartford, is aiming to raise £1,000 for Cardiomyopathy UK.

Cardiomyopathy, a general term for diseases of the heart muscles, is the biggest medical cause of sudden death in young people, but if sufferers are diagnosed and treated, most of them can live long and healthy lives.

Mrs Warwick's father, Stephen Sullivan, underwent surgery to install a mechanical heart valve and is now doing well.

"It was a very tough time for all the family," said Mrs Warwick.

"Knowing how much Cardiomyopathy UK does to help families in similar positions to us, I'm very pleased to be able to raise money for them."

The challenge is no mean feat, with runners weaving their way along the

River Thames, starting at three different points around Greenwich Park and Blackheath and finishing near St James' Park.

Those taking part are advised to build up to the task slowly, allowing themselves months to prepare and starting by spending around 30 minutes walking or jogging around four times a week.

Braving chilly mornings or bleak evenings, the runners are gradually put through their paces, pushing themselves further and further towards their goals.

Ms Gunne said she has noticed a number of health benefits since beginning her training regime.

"I will be a runner for the rest of my life now," she said.

"I'm really disciplined now. Cakes and wine have been replaced by early morning runs along the seafront and I love it. I've gone from a size 12 to a size 10."



**OLYMPIC ADVICE:** Daley Thompson with Jo Gunne and Suzy Tigwell (above left) and Sheila Vickers from Maidstone (above right)



Ms Gunne and her sister took part in a special training day run by decathlete Daley Thompson, who scooped two Olympic gold medals and broke the world record for the event on multiple occasions, at Battersea Park.

They got to meet others who were running for the charity, and received

advice from Mr Thompson.

"It was really good fun and gave us the incentive to remember why we are doing this and the passion to carry on," Ms Gunne added.

"It was great to hear from Daley about what it means to wear that green vest."

## EXTRA TRAINS FOR MARATHON FANS...

WITH hundreds of thousands of spectators expected to be making their way into the city for the London Marathon, Southeastern has announced there will be additional trains running to help.

Southeastern says it is aiming to "cater for both runners and spectators" this year.

Those taking part in the marathon are being offered free travel from Charing Cross, Waterloo East, Cannon Street, London Bridge and Victoria Station over to the start lines.

Runners won't need to purchase a ticket but will just need to give their race number to a member of staff at the gate line to claim their travel.

There will be extra trains running to the start lines situated at Greenwich, Maze Hill and Blackheath.

However there are no trains to Blackheath from London Bridge this year, and those hoping to travel there should instead go to London Charing Cross, Waterloo East or Victoria stations.

Services will also be extend-

ed or will have additional stops included to help out passengers making the journey.

This includes the 6.20am service from Hastings to London Charing Cross, which will also be calling at Tunbridge Wells, High Brooms, Tonbridge, Hildenborough, Sevenoaks, Orpington and Waterloo East.

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# Bishop hits back at poll claiming UK faith is dying

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

**T**HE Bishop of Rochester has hit back at claims the nation is losing faith in religion – claiming he is seeing converts “every week”. His comments come after a recent survey revealed we are becoming a more secular nation than ever before, with the UK coming nearly bottom of 65 countries when it came to having faith in a religion.

Just 30 per cent of those quizzed in the UK termed themselves religious, with more than half saying they were not religious at all and 13 declaring themselves atheist. A handful of others refused to define their faith.

It means the UK is in front of just China, Japan, Sweden, Hong Kong, the Czech Republic and Holland in terms of a lack of faith.

In contrast, Thailand boasts a population where 94 per cent claim they are religious, with Morocco, Georgia, Bangladesh and Armenia all at 93 per cent.

But the Rt Rev James Langstaff, the Bishop of Rochester, dismissed the findings.

While he admitted they have “challenges” ahead, he said that claims religion, or faith, was dying out in Britain was “manifestly, not so”.

He told KoS: “A lot of churches, certainly in my diocese, are growing along with a lot of independent churches.

“So, that is not the case. I am confirming adult converts every week.

“What I think that maybe is true, is that whereas, let’s say, 30 years ago a lot of people might have ticked a box saying they were Church of England or Methodist or something, although they might not have actually practised that.

“Nowadays, you might say people are being more honest and the statistics might clearly reflect that as more people are less reticent in putting themselves down as no religion, or whatever the category might be.

“I think what you could say traditional church going has certainly declined, but I think you will also find that the people who are regularly in churches are probably more committed to it than they might have been in the past.”

Asked about the future of the church in England, he said: “I see challenges – we have never been without challenges in terms of different patterns of social life. We will



**BISHOP:** Rt Rev James Langstaff

have people who go two Sundays a month instead of four Sundays a month because they have children’s rugby, or whatever it happens to be.

“But, certainly, when you look at the people I am ordaining every year, the people I am confirming, the people being married and those sorts of things, we are still pretty busy.”

The view was echoed by a spokesman for Canterbury Cathedral, spiritual home of the Church of England.

A spokesman explained: “I would not like to say a survey like that is wrong, but certainly the number of people coming to services at the cathedral has gone up since 2000 by about 30 per cent which is very encouraging.”

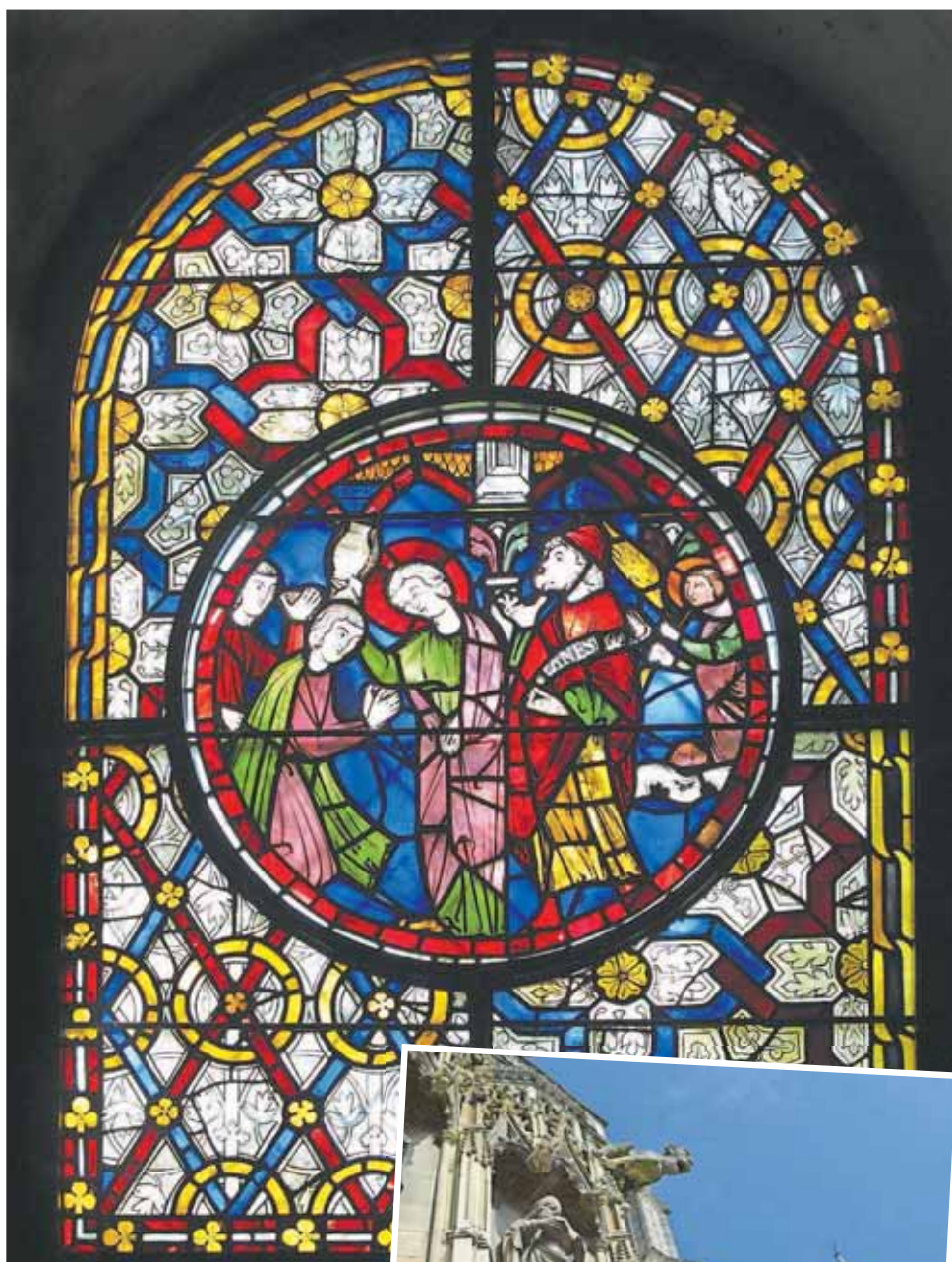
Jean-Marc Leger, president of Win/Gallup International, which conducted the poll, explained: “Religion continues to dominate our everyday lives and we see that the total number of people who consider themselves to be religious is actually relatively high.

“Furthermore, with the trend of an increasingly religious youth globally, we can assume that the number of people who consider themselves religious will only continue to increase.”

And of course its far from just Christianity. Islam is growing and seeing a rise in popularity.

A spokesman at the Canterbury Muslim Cultural Centre said: “We are doing very well – we are growing. I am not sure about figures, but I know both men and women are joining. We are getting quite a few students from the local university too.

“This survey doesn’t affect us at all – as a Muslim, I can see this faith growing.”



**PRAISE:** All religions claim faith remains key in the UK

David Gradus, the secretary of the small Margate Hebrew Congregation, said just three people attend their synagogue, and he would like to attract more.

But he remains confident the Jewish faith is well represented in Kent, and told us: “We are doing fine, thanks very much.”

One of the biggest Sikh temples in the UK is in Gravesend. A spokesman for the Gurdwara there said: “We welcome all faiths. At the Gurdwara, all the staff are volunteers and we have people from many faiths going along to help out. It is a wonderful calm atmosphere.

“Thousands of people turn out for the festival of Vaisakhi, and again the crowd is made up of people from lots of religions.

“I am sure this survey is correct, but it is not affecting the Sikhs.”

Founded in 1896, the Humanist Association in the UK has more than 40,000 members who say they want a world where everyone lives cooperatively on the basis of shared human values, respect for human rights, and

concern for future generations.

It said: “We promote humanism, work on behalf of the non-religious, and support those who wish to live humanist lives, including through the provision of humanist ceremonies. We campaign for a secular state, challenge religious privilege, and promote equal treatment in law and policy of everyone regardless of religion or belief.”

The group says the Gallup poll, which used the same methodology around the world to ensure fairness and to build a global map of religious identification, has found similar results to previous surveys of its kind.

This included a 2014 British Social Attitudes Survey that discovered 51 per cent of the population was non-religious.

It explains polls from YouGov, Survation, Ipsos Mori and others have all found similar results in recent years.

British Humanist Association director of public affairs and campaigns

Pavan Dhaliwal said: “While politicians continue to make exaggerated claims about the importance of Christianity to Britain’s shared cultural life, yet another poll has shown that British people are largely non-religious.

“On top of that we know that a majority of people in Britain, whatever their religious or non-religious beliefs, do not want to see public policies influenced by religious ideas. Let our politicians take note: continued attempts to justify policy on the grounds of a religious identity most of us do not share not only breeds needless division, but builds upon serious shaky ground.”

The world poll showed overall, those under the age of 34 tend to be more religious than other age groups, as do those without a formal education, but in general religious people are a majority in all educational levels.





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**LIKEABLE:** Pop star and northern girl Amelia Lily is starring as the Narrator in Joseph And His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat in Gravesend

## "I didn't get much sleep - I thought I 'd lose the plot"

Amelia Lily tells **Sarah Linney** about learning an entire show in four days

**A**S anyone who has been to see the musical Joseph And The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat will know, the Narrator is a very big part.

In fact, she barely goes off stage. So when pop singer Amelia Lily was given just four days to learn the entire role, she had her work cut out.

"Someone dropped out, so I got a call. I thought I was going to lose the plot - literally. I've never experienced stress like it in all my life!" the 20-year-old laughed.

"It tested my ability to remember things - I was quite impressed with myself! But I didn't get much sleep."

After finishing third on the X Factor in 2011, Amelia was signed to Kent label Xenomania and had several top 40 hits, including number two smash You Bring Me Joy.

But she has taken a change of direction to star in Joseph, which comes to The Woodville Theatre in

Gravesend next week. Fellow X Factor finalist Lloyd Daniels plays Joseph.

"I went to a dance school when I was younger and did lots of theatre, but I had never done a full musical," Amelia said.

"It has been a big challenge for me but I always wanted to go down the theatre route and I am loving it. I was really familiar with the show - I have seen it a number of times and my brother [Lewis Bradley, who featured on the show Any Dream Will Do] played Joseph in the West End.

"A lot of people have said I have put my own stamp on the part - I don't know what I've done with it! But I have quite a rock singing voice, and I think I've brought more of an edgy twist."

Pop music is on hold while she tours with the show, but Amelia says that doesn't matter.

"I've always wanted to improve my soprano head voice, and this

has given me the opportunity to do that," she said.

"I might be a little more experimental with my pop music now. But I'm only 20. I've got plenty of time!"

The tour takes Amelia, who comes from Middlesbrough, to a different part of the UK every week but she tends to go home at weekends.

"You need that space sometimes if you are with the same group of people 24/7 - it gets really intense. And I want to see my boyfriend and my dogs," Amelia said.

To the latter - chihuahua Elphie and teacup chihuahua Belle - she is unabashedly devoted.

"The dogs are my world. It was hard being away from them," Amelia said.

"I have them with me this week - I'm parent Amelia. They're no bother, and I asked one of the guys backstage really nicely if he wouldn't mind just popping his head in while I am on stage."

Funny, likeable and refreshingly unstarry, Amelia says she never dreamed entering the X Factor would lead to all this.

"When people ask to see you, you think, you would never have known who I am if I hadn't been on the show," she said.

"When people call me Amelia Lily, I think: you can call me Amelia! It's fine!"

"I want to do all sorts now - TV presenting, more theatre, work on my album."

"I'm living my dream, because you've got one life. If you want to do something, do it."

Joseph And The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat will be at the Woodville Theatre from Tuesday, April 28 until Saturday, May 2.

There are evening performances every day, and matinees every day except Tuesday.

Tickets cost between £17 and £29. To book, call 01474 337459 or visit woodville.seatlive.com

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## Women Seeking

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**BLONDE** female, 5ft 11ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025 ☺

**SOPHIA** young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel No: 0906 500 1912 Box 413399

**JAN** 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349 ☺

**ADVENTUROUS** sexy lady, 38yrs, married but seeks no strings fun with discreet man, any age, I'm tall, slim and dominant. Aca. Tel No: 0906 500 1913 Box 415301

**ATTRACTIVE** lady early 50's, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTm professional, caring gent, 50-60's for attention and future together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416569

**ANNE**, mid 40's, cheerful busty curvy affectionate real woman! Seeks gent, any age or looks for nights at mine. Tel No: 0906 500 1914 Box 410291

**JAN** 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349 ☺

**DISCREET** lady, 42yrs wants to make you happy, come to me and let me do that for you. Aca. Tel No: 0906 500 1915 Box 409901

**TARA**, confident lady, long legs, long hair, seeks a saucy man of any age for daytime, no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 4693 Box 414701

**ALISON** 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416517 ☺

**ALISON** 30, pretty, slim with long brown hair, fit and active seeks fit older male for energetic relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416497 ☺

**DEBORAH** 41, intelligent brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416515 ☺

**ATTRACTIVE** black, athletic lady, varied interests, seeks similar white, old fashioned, genuine male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416215

**MAY** sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211 ☺

**SUE** young at heart, good looking, enjoy life, socialising, beach walks, gardening, theatre, seeking male, 55-65 to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416171

**JACKIE** 32, attractive professional, very smart and feminine, long brown hair, seeks smart, confident, older male who knows how to treat a lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416297 ☺

**BLONDE** female, 47, looking for fun, sensual, experienced, understanding, seeking similar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415675 ☺

**JANINE** 36, faithful, sincere, will never stop seeking similar male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414629 ☺

**BECKY** 23, classy blonde, long blonde hair, blue eyes seeks loving older guy to spoil and pamper her. Discretion assured/guaranteed. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416233 ☺

**LINDA** 26, cheeky, curvy brunette, a little shy at first, likes to look after herself, seeks dark haired male for discreet naughty but fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416195 ☺

**TERESA** 39, petite, cuddly and bubbly seeks kind older male to travel, have fun, and take care of, pamper and flirt with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416081 ☺

**LUCY** stunning tall brunette, looking for exciting times, seeks like-minded, adventurous male who is willing to try anything once or maybe even twice! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416079 ☺

**PETITE** blonde, blue eyes, very feminine and sensual seeks younger male for friendship and discreet fun. Can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416077 ☺

**SARAH** 29yr old pretty slim single mum of one, interesting, lively good fun, enjoys nights in/out, music, seeking similar easy going, genuine, honest man/dad to get to know. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415841 ☺

**ANGIE** attractive nurse 39yrs, new to area/advertising, likes dog walking, being social, meals in/out, WLTm honest, fun male for possible ltr. looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415827 ☺

**LISA** attractive petite Filipino female, very lonely, wanting to find love, companionship and to be happy, looking for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415549 ☺

**SUE** 65, 5ft 8ins, blonde hair, fashionable, smoker, GSOH, enjoys meals out, travel, animals, WLTm kind, shyish man for friendship, maybe more. Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415735 ☺

**INTELLIGENT** funny guy without a huge ego required for damaged heart. Casey 39, size 10, curves in all the right places, pretty, kind, loving, genuine, romantic and available. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415509 ☺

**BLACK** lady 43, sincere, down to earth, fun loving, likes theatre, cinema, meals out with walks, seeking white gent with GSOH, sincere and down to earth. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415477 ☺

**JENNY** voluptuous blonde tanned well-presented female, enjoys being and giving pampering, cooking, cosy nights, looking for some broadminded excitement. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415399 ☺

**JOYCE** 39, attractive GSOH, loves nights out, honest, loyal, fun to be with, looking for mature male for adult companionship, meals out and hopefully more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415561 ☺

**NICOLETTE** 32 petite professional attractive black female looking for similar hardworking white male who like me loves life and is serious about finding a LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415545 ☺

**PAT** blonde blue eyed curvy, cuddly female, attractive, likes swimming, gardening, holidays, my job/home, looking for happiness with quiet content grounded male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415533 ☺

**MANDY** 35, petite attractive slim female with very GSOH, likes to keep fit, meals in/out, WLTm genuine child friendly guy/dad for fun times together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415513 ☺

**JACKIE** very pretty leggy well-mannered/educated 28yr old female, loves nights in/out, sports, WLTm sincere male up to 35yrs for friendship, hopefully ltr. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415377 ☺

**DONNA** 36yrs un-modest but very attractive, nice eyes, good figure, GSOH, OHAC, great job, sick of never meeting Mr Right, looking for someone special. Genuine male please. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415187 ☺

**ALISON** 27yr old very bored broadminded female with plenty of free time on her hands looking for some adult fun times. Call me, I won't disappoint. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415177 ☺

## Men Seeking

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**GARETH** handsome 40's pilot, strong tall build, seeks daytime discreet passion with lady 30-65. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414421 ☺

**KEEN** cyclist 58, non competitive, seeks similar female for sea wall, countryside ride, walking etc for fun, laughs and whatever. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413337

**FEMALE** pillion passenger sought for motor cycle rides / adventures and anything else good/bad. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416827 ☺

**CHIPS** on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, VGSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. NE Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725

**LOCAL** Sevenoaks man, seeks local lady for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417127 ☺

**MALE** 46, wishes to meet female of similar age for fun, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415923

**DAVE** genuine guy, 6ft, black hair, blue eyes, medium build, likes sports, gardening, music, seeks female with GSOH and genuine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388372

**PETE** 49, slim, 5ft 7in s, smoker, creative, likes art, live bands, outdoors, seeks similar female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416421 ☺

**MALE** 70's, fit, looking for lady to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416663 ☺

**HARRY** 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015 ☺

**BARRY** divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717

**JAMES** 36, well travelled, likes photography, cinema, seeks fun girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 337663

**JAMES** 39, blond hair, blue eyes, seeking female for fun times, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390892 ☺

**GRAHAM** tall, semi retired, Piscean, likes sailing, seeks female, any nationality. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415463 ☺

**MALE** blond hair, blue eyes, seeking female with GSOH, 45-60. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416445 ☺

**TALL** male, likes meals out, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416899

**JACK** 47, tall, good-looking, average build, GSOH, seeks broadminded female for discreet no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416867 ☺

**ASHFORD** male, 66, GSOH, easy going, smoker, down to earth, adventurous, seeks like-minded female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416845 ☺

**JON** seeking female for fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416771 ☺

**YOUNG** 64yr old male, slim, GSOH, adventurous, outgoing, likes most things, seeks easygoing, laidback, open-minded lady for friendship and good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399539

**JACKIE** extremely sensual lady but for your eyes only! likes horses, keeping fit, gardening looking for genuine love interest and companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414721 ☺

**TERI** separated single lady, blonde, blue eyes, slim, WLTm compatible male for genuine friendship, meals out, weekends away, nights out and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414361 ☺

**DEBBIE** brown eyed attractive social female, romantic, good listener, loves children, looking for similar nice male/dad to get to know, hopefully leading to more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414383 ☺

**JEAN** slim blonde divorcee bubbly affectionate, romantic with lots of love to give, looking for man who knows how to look after a lady for meals in/out, friendship/ltr. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414699 ☺

**MALE** 46, wishes to meet female of similar age for fun, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415923 ☺

**JACK** 47, tall, good looking, average build, GSOH, seeks slim, broad minded female, any age for discreet no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416567 ☺

**KIND** affectionate male, seeks likeminded lady. Tonbridge/Sevenoaks. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383518

**NICE** guy seeks attractive lady for fun time, maybe more. Sevenoaks. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 385370

**JACK** 47, tall, good looking, average build, GSOH, seeks slim, broad minded female, any age for discreet no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416567 ☺

**MALE** blond hair, blue eyes, seeking female with GSOH, 45-60. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416445 ☺

**JACK** 47, tall, good looking, average build, GSOH, seeks slim, broadminded, submissive female, any age for discreet no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416435 ☺

**PETE** 49, slim, 5ft 7in s, smoker, creative, likes art, live bands, outdoors, seeks similar female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416421 ☺

**SIMON** 49, actor, likes music, films, reading, writing, loop holes, Thailand, Singapore, seeking pretty female, 35 plus for friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415855

**ELDERLY** Redhill male, seeks slim lady to reignite ones thoughts of female company. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415931 ☺

**ACTIVE** honest, reliable, loyal, N/S male, 70, varied interests, seeks slim, positive, 60's lady for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415791 ☺

**MIKE** Canterbury mature male, seeks single mummy/dad, 28-42, slim-medium build for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415275 ☺

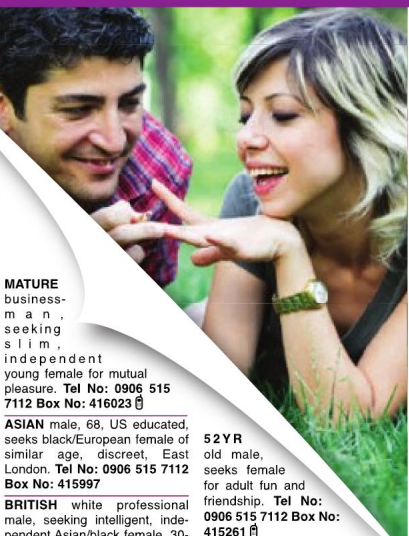
**GRAHAM** tall, semi-retired, Piscean, likes sailing, seeks female, any nationality. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415463 ☺

**SIMON** 49, actor, likes music, films, reading, puzzles, loop holes, ambiguity, seeks pretty leggy female, 35 plus for friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415275 ☺

**ANDY** young 66, widower, honest, caring, affectionate, GSOH, looking for LTR with lady 60's, slim and likeminded. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415093 ☺

**JOHN** own business, blue eyes, dark hair, loving, caring, tactile, 5ft 10ins, own home, likes to wine and dine, come and meet me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414987 ☺

**BUILDER** 45, tall, good-looking, kind, considerate, easy going seeks female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415315



**MIKE** Canterbury mature male, seeks single mummy/dad, 28-42, slim-medium build for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415275 ☺

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**JOHN** own business, blue eyes, dark hair, loving



# Sir Terry takes affectionate and funny stroll down memory lane

By Maria Chiorando

maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk

**P**RESENTER Sir Terry Wogan will be hosting a special evening in Tunbridge Wells this summer.

The Irish favourite will be sharing stories and anecdotes from his career during a show at the Assembly Hall Theatre. There will also be a question and answer section.

He told KoS: "It's always a pleasure to enjoy the Garden of England - I'm looking forward to my visit, and meeting my loyal listeners."

"Anyone coming to see the show can expect only me, I'm afraid, and I won't have a brass band to play the Floral Dance luckily for everybody..."

During a career that has seen him work on Radio 2, as well as present the Eurovision Song Contest among others, Sir Terry has been the winner of numerous awards including TV Times TV Personality of the Year which he won for 10 years in a row.

But he is unmoved by the accolades: "The most important thing to remember is that awards, though gratifying and flattering, like fame, are not forever," he says.



**EXPERIENCED:** Sir Terry Wogan's career has spanned decades

"Enjoy the fuss, it won't last. I won't be leaving any 'footprints on the sands of time'."

At his peak, he presented prime time chat show Wogan, allowing him to meet some of the biggest stars on the planet - from Hollywood icons to sporting heroes.

The show aired for a decade from 1982 until 1992. While successful, it didn't always run smoothly. During an interview with Anne Ban-

croft (who played Mrs Robinson in *The Graduate*) she would only answer 'yes' or 'no' to questions.

He said: "Looking back at all the people I have interviewed, one question I should have asked is 'What the hell are you doing here on a talk show, if you don't want to talk?'"

His most fond memory is not the chat show though. He says: "Always and ever, the most important an satisfying thing I have ever, and

ever will do on TV or radio, is *Children in Need*."

An Evening with Terry Wogan is at the Tunbridge Wells Theatre on June 10 at 8pm.

Tickets cost £29.50 plus a £1.25 per ticket booking fee (£1.50 if booking through the box office) up to a maximum of 10 tickets.

For more details, visit [www-assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://www-assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk) or call the box office on 01892 530613.

## Country music in Medway

IRISH country music star Nathan Carter will be playing at Medway's Central Theatre on May 15.

Tickets start at £20.50. For more information, visit [www.medwayticketslive.co.uk](http://www.medwayticketslive.co.uk).



## The swan and only opera...

BASED on a tale from the Finnish folk epic the *Kalevala*, *Swanhunter* is a chamber opera.

It will come to Canterbury's Gulbenkian Theatre on May 1 at 7pm and May 2 at 2pm.

For more information, visit the website at [www.thegulbenkian.co.uk](http://www.thegulbenkian.co.uk) or call the box office on 01227 769075. Tickets cost £8.

## Jim Davidson's new tour

COMEDIAN Jim Davidson is on the road again with his latest show entitled *Charlton Nil*.

He will be appearing at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, on November 22. Tickets, priced from £23.50, are on sale now.

For tickets, call 01303 228600.



## Indie favourite in Margate

ROCK-pop band Texas from Glasgow, originally formed in 1986 and fronted by singer Sharleen Spiteri will be playing at Margate's Winter Gardens on May 3.

For more information on tickets, visit the website at [www.margatewintergardens.co.uk](http://www.margatewintergardens.co.uk) or call the venue's box office on 01843 292795.

*The Show with something for everybody*

# Weald Country & Craft Show & The Festivals of Dogs

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[www.wealdcountryshow.co.uk](http://www.wealdcountryshow.co.uk) Adults 7.50 Concessions 6.00 Children 3.00

Online Discounts



## Wuthering into Maidstone

CLOUDBUSTING - a tribute to Kate Bush - will take place at the Hazlitt Theatre in Maidstone on May 7.

Tickets cost £17, visit [www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk](http://www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk).



## Taiko drumming masters

THE YAMMATO Drummers are a company of master drummers who bring the ancient art of taiko drumming into the 21st century with their displays of expertise and athleticism.

They will play at the Leas Cliff Hall in Folkestone on May 11.

For information, visit [www.leascliffhall.co.uk](http://www.leascliffhall.co.uk).

## Folk music on tap in bar

CANTERBURY-based folk-hop outfit Coco and the Butterfields will be playing at the The Duke of Cumberland in Whitstable on May 31.

Tickets cost £12, for information visit [www.allgigs.co.uk](http://www.allgigs.co.uk).



## An artistic Chain Reaction

FOUR Kent-based artists will be showing drawings, paintings, sculpture and poetry in an exhibition called Chain Reaction at the Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells. The launch is on May 14 at 5-7pm.

To find out more about the exhibition, visit [www.trinitytheatre.net](http://www.trinitytheatre.net).

# Turner Contemporary extends art to train trip

By Maria Chiorando

[maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk](mailto:maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk)

**T**HE journey to Margate's Turner Contemporary gallery has inspired a soundscape which will be available as an app download from June 19.

The art gallery, which opened in 2011, worked with artist and composer Claudia Molitor on the piece called Sonorama, designed to be listened to on a train journey between London St Pancras and Margate.

Inspired by trains, journeying and the disconnect between looking at the passing landscape and hearing only the interior sounds of the carriage, she wanted to create a piece that 'filled this gap between the visual and sonic realities of train travel'.

Imagining the journey as the 'score' Ms Molitor's works, collected interviews, readings and British Library archive material respond to the social history of the route.

Artist Ms Molitor said: "In developing the Sonorama I set out to intermingle my perception of the journey with some socio-cultural



memories and contemporary concerns, in a way that complicates rather than simplifies the way we might conceive of the journey."

Sarah Martin, head of exhibitions at the Turner Contemporary, added: "The gallery is delighted to be collaborating with Claudia Molitor on this unique and ground-breaking project."

"Developing a platform for work that crosses over between visual arts, performance, sound art and musical composition has been a strength of our programme to date

and the Sonorama maintains this commitment, taking it to a new level of ambition."

The journey between London and Margate is one that JMW Turner undertook regularly during the 1830s and 40s, arriving in Margate via steam ship.

A spokesman said: "By locating the Sonorama on the train route from St Pancras, the artist has created a work that literally extends throughout Kent and offers an opportunity to engage with contemporary art whilst on the move."



**MODERN:** The gallery has an innovative approach to art



**ST PANCRAS:** The soundscape means the art is heard en route

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# Improve kitchen skills with a touch of Rosemary

Food expert and reality show character Rosemary Shrager invites **Keeley Bolger** into her kitchen...

**R**OSEMARY Shrager beams as she ushers me into her Tunbridge Wells cookery school.

"One thing I can't bear is standing on ceremony," she says.

"There's none of that here."

She's right of course. Warm, approachable and lively – if slightly nutty – company, Ms Shrager is ever the show-woman.

I've been invited along for a baking class, and no sooner has she doled out smiley introductions, coffee and pastries, she's grilling me on the nitty-gritty of my bread-making skills.

Having worked with top chefs Pierre Koffmann and Jean-Christophe Novelli, appeared on Hell's Kitchen, hosted countless of her own cook-

ery series and helped whip some unpolished young women into shape on Ladette To Lady, Ms Shrager isn't about to stand on ceremony when it comes to cajoling me into baking better bread.

"Come on now, turn, roll, push," bellows the 64-year-old, who regularly performs cookery demonstrations at food roadshows, pops up in pantomimes and in 2012, was even a contestant on I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!, as I weakly slide the dough around the work surface.

But my kneading skills clearly aren't cutting the mustard.

"TURN! ROLL! PUSH!" Ms Shrager repeats in her best panto Fairy Godmother voice, as she bustles over to show me how it's done.



**VARIED:** Ms Shrager has appeared in a number of shows

"There, that's better. Isn't it lovely cooking with people?"

And yes, with Ms Shrager at the hob, it is a pleasure cooking with people.

"I just love it, I just love kneading bread," she enthuses. "You need to treat food with reverence... like a baby."

And while Rosemary's bread babies are baking away, we gossip about her famous cookery school alumni (both Paul Hollywood and Janet Street-Porter have been), and then make a rich tomato soup to accompany our bakes.

As the delicious aroma of baking bread fills the room and the soup simmers away, Ms Shrager is in her element, regaling the room with stories of being pulled over by the police when she first passed her driving test

for having part of the engine missing, and then going into a robust rant about her dislike of slow road-users.

"I just love cooking," she says. "I love the whole feel about the products, the freshness, how they should taste, and I love working with the latest whatever it is and learning what to do with it."

And the cook, who recently took her grandchildren to Italy (they had great fun picking olives together), has a set idea on what makes a good cookery teacher – somebody just like her!

"I wish I'd had a me to take me to where I am today," she says, smiling.

Once the rolls are out of the oven, we sit down on a big table and break the bread together, feeling right at home.

## Hitting the right note

**C**LASSICAL singer Russell Watson – often referred to as 'the people's tenor' – will be performing at the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells this month.

He will be performing there as part of his UK tour, which sees him singing in smaller venues, often accompanied only by a piano.

An Intimate Evening with Russell Watson takes place on April 30.

For information, call 01892 530613.

## Holland in Dartford

**T**HE ORCHARD Theatre will be presenting Jools Holland and his Rhythm & Blues Orchestra on May 6.

His band will feature Gilson Lavis with special guest Marc Almond and guest vocalists Ruby Turner, Louise Marshall & Mabel Ray.

Ticket prices are between £39 and £52.

For more information, visit the website at [www.orchardtheatre.co.uk](http://www.orchardtheatre.co.uk).

## Courageous comedy

**F**OLKESTONE'S Quarterhouse hosts Talk About Something You Like – a play that has been described as 'a funny, moving and unflinchingly honest account of mental illness'.

This one-man show is about a summer spent in an NHS psychiatric unit.

The performance is on May 23 at 6.30pm.

To buy tickets, contact the box office on 01303 760750

## Jersey Boys in Chatham

**T**HE JERSEY Boys comes to Chatham's Britannia Theatre this summer.

The musical, which is described as 'a celebration of the music of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons' features songs including Teenager In Love, Oh Carol and Why Do Fools Fall In Love.

Tickets cost £15.

For more information, visit [www.thebritanniakent.com](http://www.thebritanniakent.com) or call 0844 858 6656.

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# Walking in the footsteps of genius

## TRAVEL REVIEW: Giverny

By Maria Chiorando

**S**OME images are so iconic, they seem to be burnt into the retina.

After seeing thousands of reproductions of Claude Monet's water lilies, festooned on prints, posters and even paper napkins, to catch a glimpse of the real thing is breathtaking.

I am standing on that famous little bridge in Mr Monet's garden, which has been lovingly maintained, with every detail from the famous weeping willow trees, to the 'paintbox' flower patches exactly as the artist himself would have seen it.

Monet's house and garden, which is open until November 1, is just one of the attractions art buffs can visit in the Normandy chocolate box village of Giverny. Tiny, but bustling with a rich history of art, and especially impressionism, many people try and pack it all in over a day or less.

This is an injustice – the area deserves a more leisurely approach.

The village is an easy trip from Kent – a Eurostar, train and bus ride away. After getting dropped off by the bus, we stroll to our B&B La Dime.

We are greeted by a beautiful courtyard, replete with picturesque well. The interior is no less striking, with a perfectly designed shabby chic look of exposed beams, interesting prints and crisp white linens. Unlike an average hotel, there is no reception area, just a large lounge where you can sit and enjoy a selection of beverages. I recommend the local cidre – crisp, clean and light, unlike the syrupy-sweet concoctions often found in English bars.

The village is well-known for its Michelin-starred restaurant Jardin des Plumes. Set in perfectly-manicured grounds, it is upmarket



**PICTURESQUE:** La Dime's charming courtyard, crisp Normandy cidre and Vernon's town centre [Matt Goldsmith]

yet relaxed and friendly.

The restaurant's star is well-deserved: given notice, they will cater for any dietary requirements, and we enjoyed a sophisticated yet hearty meal, all beautifully presented.

On Saturday morning, we borrowed a pair of bikes from the B&B for a scenic cycle along the river, to Vernon.

This town is well-known for its bustling market, which offers a wide range of food and drinks,

as well as clothing and shoes.

After a browse, we visited Vernon's Fine Art Museum, open until the end of November. This is not to be missed.

The curators have a huge stash of art, and they rotate what is on show. Of course, no collection would be complete without a Monet, but there was a vast range of sculpture, cartoons and other paintings.

The town of Vernon is steeped in history, and the best way to appreciate

it is with a tour. The highlight was the Notre Dame Cathedral – a stunning mixture of medieval and gothic architecture, with enormous stained-glass windows.

We headed back along the river to Giverny, to visit the Impressionist Museum ([www.mdig.fr/en](http://www.mdig.fr/en)). Beautiful inside and out, the museum, which is open until November 1, hosts brightly coloured gardens.

The layout of the gallery is superb,

## TRAVEL FACTS

Eurostar ([www.eurostar.com/uk-en](http://www.eurostar.com/uk-en)) costs from £69 return and the train from Paris was with Voyages SNCF ([www.uk.voyages-sncf.com/en/](http://www.uk.voyages-sncf.com/en/)) from £12 return.

B&B for two people from €130 per night ([www.ladime-degiverny.com/](http://www.ladime-degiverny.com/)).

Seine cruise was with La Musadière.

La Fondation Claude Monet [www.fondation-monet.com/fr/](http://www.fondation-monet.com/fr/)

As well as hosting a selection of Monet's own efforts, the gallery has a huge body of work. This is heaven for anyone with an interest in art. The display focuses on the origins, geographical diversity, history and development in other streams, of impressionism.

The gallery always hosts guest exhibitions, and currently have Degas as part of their collection until July 19.

For dinner, although Jardin des Plumes was a hard act to follow, l'Ancien Hotel Baudy offered an excellent alternative. Set in rolling gardens, the restaurant is famous for the number of artists who painted there.

There is a small studio in the garden, where painters used to work.

The fare is well-priced and traditional, with a good wine list.

On Sunday, armed with a packed lunch made for us by the B&B, we took in a two-hour river cruise along the Seine. Captain Alain Leneuve pointed out all the historical points of interest along the way – this was a highlight, and a truly relaxing way to spend some time en route back to Paris.

In the capital, it is possible to visit the Orangerie Museum, to see the famous lilies one more time in Monet's masterpiece water lily series – it is the perfect end to a cultural weekend.

## Film Reviews by Damon Smith



**AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON** (12A, 141 mins) Action/Sci-Fi/Thriller/Romance

AS the roaring success of last year's Guardians Of The Galaxy confirmed, our appetite for films set in the Marvel Comics universe is voracious.

Director Joss Whedon is back at the helm to lay the narrative groundwork for the 2016 blockbuster, Captain America: Civil War, which will tear the eponymous team apart as governments worldwide prepare to pass an act regulating superhuman activity.

Avengers: Age Of Ultron duplicates some of the large-scale digital destruction of the Transformers franchise.

Spader's vocal performance lends gravitas to his mechanised megalomaniac while Downey Jr predictably snaffles the majority of the droll quips.

Age Of Ultron doesn't disappoint the ardent fan boys and girls.

**THE GOOD LIE** (12A, 117 mins) Drama

BASED on the experiences of real Sudanese refugees, The Good Lie

is a thought-provoking drama set the year before the September 11 attacks, about the plight of three young men who are offered shelter in America as part of an ongoing resettlement effort.

Abital (Kuoth Wiel), Jeremiah (Ger Duany), Paul (Emmanuel Jal) and Mamere (Arnold Oceng) arrive in America and pass through customs in New York, where they are forced to separate.

Abital is sent to Boston while the three young men share an apartment in Kansas City. The plan to support the refugees in their bewildering new home unravels and an employment counsellor named Carrie (Reese Witherspoon) steps in to take charge, aided by her caring boss Jack (Corey Stoll). Together, they help Jeremiah, Paul and Mamere to acclimatise and escape the temptations of crime and drug abuse.



**THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES** (15, 99 mins) Documentary

AS the General Election moves ever closer with the Conservatives and Labour in deadlock in the opinion polls, we are all reminded of the banking crisis which

necessitated the current age of austerity. Award-winning director Michael Winterbottom and controversial stand-up Russell Brand explore the recent financial meltdown in a provocative feature, combining archive footage, documentary filmmaking and comedy to highlight the wealth gap of modern society and the escalation of events that rocked the world.



IT'S so tempting, I know. All those annuals you've sown indoors from seed are now big enough to plant out, the tomato seedlings are doing well and you just want to clear those windowsills, the greenhouse or the conservatory to make a head start on summer.

But be warned, if you risk planting tender plants out before the last frosts have passed, it could ruin all your hard work of the previous months.

Depending on where you live, a late frost can hit in late May or even in June, reducing your tender plants to shrivelling corpses, so it's prudent to be cautious about planting out or removing protection too early and to plant tender bedding plants out after the danger of frost has passed.

It's best really to sow seed of frost-tender vegetables including French and runner beans, courgettes, marrows, cucumbers, tomatoes, squashes and melons, in April under cover because they are going to take four or five weeks to establish before they can be put outside, so that way they are timed to be planted out after the last frosts are over.

Anything grown in a frost-free greenhouse such as patio plants and frost-tender vegetables will need hardening off before being planted outside, to acclimatise them slowly to outdoor conditions. Harden them off two to three weeks before planting.

They can be hardened off in a cold frame or simply moved outside into a sunny, sheltered position during the day and then brought back inside at night.

For new tender plants which are al-



**TLC:** Plants can overcome tough conditions with some tender loving care

## A touch of frost in the garden

ready in the ground but need some protection, cloches are always a good idea and can be removed during the day when the temperatures rise.

Protect new shoots and fruit tree blossom with horticultural fleece and cover plants in an unheated greenhouse with newspaper. If spring frosts have affected tender young growth, causing scorching and pale brown

patches to appear between the leaf veins, often on the exposed and top edges of the plant, don't give up just yet as the plant may still be alive.

If you want to plant up hanging baskets early with young plants, make sure you take the baskets under cover at night, keeping them in a sheltered porch or similar area. Troughs and patio tubs which you want to plant up

with vulnerable plants should also be treated similarly, or covered at night with horticultural fleece.

Frost problems are often made worse where plants face the morning sun, as this causes them to defrost quickly, rupturing their cell walls. Periods of cold, frosty weather during April and May can also kill blossom and damage fruit. Camellia and mag-

nolia are particularly vulnerable and can be ruined in a single frost.

Avoid planting tender plants in frost pockets, which tend to be at the lowest point in a garden, as cold air and frost always descend and settle at the lowest point. Instead, plant them in a sheltered spot, under large trees and shrubs or against walls, to give them some heat and protection during the winter.

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# Bank Holiday Fun



## Wartime remembered

CAPTURE the unique atmosphere of the 1940s at the Kent & East Sussex Railway in Tenterden on the May bank holiday.

To mark 70 years since the end of the Second World War the railway has a unique programme of events including a chance to listen to Zdenka Fantlová on Sunday, May 3, at Tenterden Station.

Recently appearing on the BBC's Antiques Roadshow Detectives, Ms Fantlová told the amazing and moving story about how she survived six death camps including the notorious Nazi camps at Auschwitz and Belzen.

Ms Fantlová will be signing copies of her book on Sunday, a remarkable memoir of love and survival in the Holocaust.

On Monday you can see a Spitfire display along the whole of the 10 ½ mile line.

At Tenterden Station on Sunday listen to a lecture on bailing out over the English Channel. Enjoy a vintage market and sweet shop, demonstrations of 1940s hair and make-up, tap dancing work-



**UNIQUE:** Capture the 1940s atmosphere. Picture: Paul Jerreat.

shops and hear My Favourite Things perform. You can also take a look inside a recreated Air Raid Anderson Shelter.

At Bodiam Station walk through a 1940s village scene and listen to the Kent Police Band on Saturday, the East Peckham Silver Band on Sunday and Steve Erickson on

Monday. There are also wartime cooking demonstrations and a children's VE Party.

Steam trains will operate all weekend and the cost is £17 for adults and £11.50 for children aged between three and 15. Family tickets are £49.50.

Telephone 01580 765155 or visit [www.kesr.org.uk](http://www.kesr.org.uk).



**ENJOY:** Free parking will be on offer for Ashford shoppers

**F** **p** **k** **g**

SHOPPERS can enjoy free parking in select council-owned car parks in Ashford and Tenterden over the two May bank holiday weekends.

Ashford Borough Council is offering free parking in the Edinburgh Road and Flour Mills car parks.

The parking will be offered on Sunday, May 3, and Monday, May 4.

It will also be available on Sunday, May 24, and Monday, May 25.

In addition to this, parking will be free after 3pm on the

same four days in the Station Road car park.

Visitors can also park for free all day in the Bridewell Lane car park in Tenterden on Sunday, May 3, Monday, May 4, Sunday, May 24, and Monday, May 25.

The council is hoping that the free parking scheme, which was rolled out in October 2014, will attract more visitors to the town centre.

It is though that this will help to boost trade, which will ultimately improve the high streets' fortunes.

The free parking scheme is one of many new initiatives being introduced to breathe new life into Ashford's high streets.

Other initiatives include the Ashford Farmers' Market, T-CAT and the Love Ashford website.

All of the car parks that are run by Ashford Borough Council are free after 6pm.

For further details on the free parking around Ashford and Tenterden you can visit [www.ashford.gov.uk/free-parking](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/free-parking)

## 1940s WEEKEND

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May

70 years on from the end of WW2

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### My Favourite Things

Featuring songs of the 1940s

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Flour Mills TN24 8PA

Free on Sundays and Bank Holidays

Station Road TN23 1PP

Free after 3pm Sundays and Bank Holidays

### TENTERDEN

Bridewell Lane TN30 6EY

Free on Sundays and  
Bank Holidays



[WWW.ASHFORD.GOV.UK/FREE-PARKING](http://WWW.ASHFORD.GOV.UK/FREE-PARKING)

FREE PARKING





# Bank Holiday Fun



## Fun for everyone at Eagle Heights

BASED just five minutes away from Junction 3 of the M25, the Eagle Heights Wildlife Foundation is one of the largest bird of prey centres in the United Kingdom.

It boasts a wide variety of birds including Bald Eagles, African Fish Eagles, vultures and many more.

Eagle Heights is sure to impress everybody, with a number of daily flying displays occurring at the centre.

As well as this selection of birds of prey, they also house huskies, meerkats, reptiles, camel and more for everyone to enjoy.

For more information on Eagle Heights, visit [www.eagleheights.co.uk](http://www.eagleheights.co.uk) or email the centre at [office@eagleheights.co.uk](mailto:office@eagleheights.co.uk) or call 01322 866577.



## Ashford Farmers' Market is a food lovers' paradise

FROM creamy cheeses and refreshing beers to flavoursome fudge, there's something for everyone at Ashford Farmers' Market.

Now's your chance to snap up seasonal fruit and veg and admire the delightful displays put on by handpicked local traders. Stroll through Ashford's cobbled streets, listen to some funky music from local bands, or watch a live chef demonstration to pick up some cooking tips.

Come and treat yourself to a selection of



award-winning cheeses from The Cheesemakers of Canterbury or a pint of locally brewed beer from The Old Dairy Brewery.

Organised by Ashford Borough Council and the Kent Farmers' Market Association, the market is held on the first Sunday of the month from 10am to 2pm on the lower High Street.

## Support for the animals needing a loving home

IF you are looking to give a permanent, loving home to a horse, pony, dog, cat, rabbit or other animal, please contact the Park House Animal Sanctuary, supported by the Lord Whisky Sanctuary Fund.

You can call them on 01303 862622 or email [lord.whisky@btinternet.com](mailto:lord.whisky@btinternet.com).

Details of animals needing homes can be found on their website at [www.lordwhisky.co.uk](http://www.lordwhisky.co.uk), or alternatively on their Facebook page.

If you would like to sponsor one of their long term



residents, become more involved in their work or become a friend of the sanctuary get in touch.

Their work is financed and supported solely by legacies, donations and fundraising by The Friends of Lord Whisky.

## Swim school teaches vital life skill

ANGELA'S Swim School is passionate about seeing people learn to swim, whether it be babies blowing bubbles in the water, children taking their first stroke or adults conquering their fear of water.

They know the importance of being able to swim and encourage all ages to learn this vital life skill.

All the instructors are trained to deliver unique teaching methods, enabling all of their swimmers to stand out above the rest, and strive to ensure all of the swimmers achieve a perfect technique.

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**For more information visit [www.lordwhisky.co.uk](http://www.lordwhisky.co.uk) or ring 01303 862622**

How to find us: take the B2068 (Stone Street) and turn at the Jet Garage. At the end of the road you will see a large white building in front of you (The Lord Whisky Centre). Turn left and the sanctuary is approx. 500 yards on the right.

**see you sunday**

7<sup>th</sup> June

**ashford farmers market**

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# Bank Holiday Fun



## Garden goods at great prices

THIS bank holiday why not pop down to Rush-it-uk.com to see the new outside display, offering everything you need for your garden.

Take advantage of the bank holiday offer by receiving a 10 per cent discount on selected items if you visit this bank holiday weekend.

If you cannot make it down, they also offer free UK delivery on [www.rush-it-uk.com](http://www.rush-it-uk.com).

With full garden furniture sets from £64.95 and seven-day-a-week customer services, customers are coming back again and again.

It's time to throw out the old deck chairs and get in style this summer, with a wide range of modern, yet affordable, furniture sets and accessories in stock right now.

With sets ranging from two people to six seats there is something to suit almost everyone.

After watering your garden with one of their many different types of hoses and accessories you may want to relax, so why not look at their swinging hammocks?

Whether you are looking to entertain or relax there are lots of ideas to help you enjoy yourselves.

The multi-purpose fire pit, which is priced at £64.99, helps keep you warm when the nights turn a little chilly but also doubles as a barbecue with a large cooking area, perfect for a family gathering or camping trip.

There are also other portable barbecue's that may suit you - and don't forget your citronella to keep the insects away.

Ornaments like the garden planter with clock and thermometer, £29.95, are a great addition and would also make a great present for any fan of gardening.

With leading brands of pools and spas such as Intex, Bestway, My Splash and Clearwater all in stock and ready for next day delivery or collection, Rush-it-uk.com has what you are looking for, regardless of your outside space.

The Lay-Z-Spa Inflatable Hot Tub is from the UK's number one inflatable hot tub brand Bestway.



**Rush-it-uk.com offers a wide range of garden furniture to help you make the most of your garden this year**

You can ease into your Lay-Z-Spa at the end of the day and feel rejuvenated by the 40°C water temperature and Lay-Z massage jets, with the knowledge that you are experi-

encing the incredible luxury and relaxation of a hot tub at fantastic value.

Garden storage is also on offer from £43.95 and garden sheds are

available from £149.

With more than 75 sheds and garden storages solutions to choose from in their expanding range, there is something for everyone.

**10% off**  
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### Garden Storage from £43.95 & Garden Sheds from £149



With over 75 sheds and garden storages solutions to choose from in our expanding range, there is something for everyone.

All the sheds come with a minimum 10 year warranty period for your piece of mind.

Our new Shed display will be available to view from 15th April, allowing you to have a good look at our most popular ranges, we will also be on hand to answer any questions you may have about the sheds and installation.

Lotus sheds are the final result of two years research and development by those who have been involved with light clad metal sheds for many years. A combined effort between a factory with brand new steel roll forming equipment and a research team have now produced a shed which is stronger, more durable, easier to build. This is, quite simply, a revolutionary development in the category of light clad metal sheds at a price that presents the best value available.

DURAMAX plastic sheds are the highest specification lightweight garden sheds in the market.

Apart from the high grade of PVC and steel, they have vents to allow airflow and a skylight as standard. Each Duramax apex shed has pad-lockable hinge doors.

LIFETIME products are the highest specification heavy duty plastic sheds in the market.

Lifetime garden sheds have steeply pitched roofs for efficient water drainage, are very low maintenance and UV-protected to resist fading or cracking.

Yardmaster and other makes also available

### Garden furniture sets

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from £64.95 and 7 day a week customer services, it no wonder our customers are coming back again and again!

It's time to throw out the old deck chairs and get in style this summer. With a wide range of modern yet affordable furniture sets and accessories in stock right now.

The stylish Black Rattan Furniture set (£224.95) offers you a sofa to lounge in with accompanying matching chairs and a toughened glass table, perfect to entertain your friends around. Choose from our range of garden umbrellas and parasols (from £9.99) to add some shade from the rays.

If you are looking for something just that little bit different then why not choose our vibrant Lime Green 6 Piece Furniture Set (£119.99) or for total relaxation go online and check out the Gravity Reclining Sun Lounger, modern and comfortable and easily manoeuvrable, folds up to save space.

With furniture sets from two people to six seats there is something to suit almost everyone from your local online store.

After watering your garden with one of our many different type of hoses and other accessories you may want to have something which is more relaxing, why not look at our swinging hammocks? We have two seat and three seater hammocks available, complete with canopy so you are out of the sun and can swing your cares away whilst watching the kids play in the pool or enjoying a classic game like swing tennis and hop scotch plus more, which are also available.



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# Bank Holiday Fun



## Chimpanzees journey to Wingham

At the end of this summer Wingham Wildlife Park is planning to bring a group of eight chimpanzees from the USA to the UK after they are retired from the Yerkes research facility.

This is a very important project for the park.

And with a £1 million budget, the park is looking for help with the ambitious project.

Tony Binskin, the park's owner, explained: "At our park we have worked on a number of projects giving animals a new home to live out the rest of their lives with us, whether it is lions from a circus or macaques from the illegal pet trade.

"These very special chimps have a long journey ahead of them, but with a custom-built enclosure we hope that their final destination here in the Garden of England will be worth it."

This long journey will include a very pricey flight from Atlanta, and the final destination is going to be a brand new, custom-built enclosure so the park is looking at a variety of different ways to raise these funds.

These include members of staff being sponsored to shave, cash donations and a raffle and auction which will be held at a special fundraising event on May 15.

Adds Mr Binskin: "The fundraising event is going to be a really special one for us, as it is the first one we have held at our park.

"It will be from 6pm on May 15, giving people a chance to see what the animals get up to in the evenings, and at £5 per head it's a really cheap evening at the park."

Jackie Binskin, Mr Binskin's wife, added: "We know that lots of people don't like to donate money because even though people can see the changes being made at the park, they might not know exactly where the money is going, which is why we are also running our Gifts for Chimps campaign through the Amazon wish list system."

Mr Binskin explained: "People get to choose what their donation buys for the chimps and can see exactly where it goes and Amazon do the rest, by sending the gifts direct to us. They are even addressed to the chimps."

To have a look at the wish list go to [www.amazon.co.uk/registry/wishlist/1J969C6ARWKB3](http://www.amazon.co.uk/registry/wishlist/1J969C6ARWKB3).

If you do buy something from the wish list, email [info@winghamwildlifepark.co.uk](mailto:info@winghamwildlifepark.co.uk) with details of your purchase and they will be able to give gifts as a thank you.



Eight chimpanzees will be brought from the USA to the UK after being retired from the Yerkes research facility, flying from Atlanta.



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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

## Fighting threat to road safety

I AM a mother first and foremost, and a disabled person who lives in Fountain Lane in Barming – one of the roads connected to Hermitage Lane.

After speaking to many people who live in the area affected, some 1,000 have signed the petition asking for a safe crossing and reduction in the unsustainable 1,500-plus houses planned that will bring Hermitage Lane to gridlock.

Last Wednesday, I with the help of Jasper Gerard the Liberal Democrat candidate and my local councillors, were able to offer a voice to the members of the public who live in the vicinity.

This is a local issue that many people feel very strongly about.

On behalf of 1,000 or so residents who signed the petition, please, Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council, come back with some positive answers so at least our children and vulnerable residents will be safe and our road isn't choked by traffic in the near future.

**Lizzie Hare,**  
Maidstone

## I wasn't being homophobic

I AM, I am afraid, at a complete loss to understand why Christopher Hudson-Gool (KoS, letters, last week) thinks that my comments are "homophobic".

My perspective arises from a position of having strayed (as a result of unrelated problems) into the early stages of homosexuality when in my early teens, although I did not really go beyond an unhealthy interest in looking at other guys.

While still in my teens I found faith in Jesus Christ and this led to my realising that homosexuality was not what I wanted; I also began to realise properly what homosexuality is.

And, of course, I came across the teaching of the Bible on this issue.

Hence I did not proceed further into homosexuality and eventually, after much prayer, I moved away from homosexuality.

But people misunderstood my attempts to distance myself from my past and, as a result, I was subjected to misplaced homophobic bullying.

## LETTER OF THE WEEK



## Treatment of stress has evolved greatly

HAD Wilfred Owen (pictured) and Siegfried Sassoon, the famous First World War poets, and Folkestone's own Walter Tull, not been officers or NCOs they might well have all been court-martialed and shot at dawn as all three suffered at different times from 'neurasthenia' or 'shell shock', which would now be called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). And the world would have been a poorer place.

All this is well recorded. Owen and Sassoon first met as patients at Craiglockhart Military Psychiatric Hospital for Officers near Edinburgh and while there wrote some of their best poetry.

Tull was sent for psychiatric treatment in early 1916 before the opening of Craiglockhart so would have been treated elsewhere.

Military hospitals however were principally concerned with getting their patients fit enough to return to the front as quickly as possible, and sadly both Owen and

Tull were subsequently killed in action in different battles in 1918.

It was considered essential for officers and NCOs to have treatment because as trained men they were in extremely short supply; so many have been killed in action.

But while their neurasthenia/shell shock merited treatment, it was mostly a different outcome for privates who were in plentiful supply.

One hundred years ago they would be court-martialed and shot at dawn rather than being given help if they reached breaking point, lost their nerve, disobeyed orders or deserted.

Fortunately all those suffering from post traumatic stress disorder today, regardless of rank, receive sympathetic care and treatment, rather than a death sentence.

**Jean Hendry**  
Folkestone

Hence I do know about homophobia and can confidently say that my recent comments are not homophobic.

If someone experiences unwanted same-sex attraction and so does not wish to be gay, why should that person not be entitled to receive advice about leaving homosexuality, or at least be told how to contact an organisation such as True Freedom Trust?

Also, if a school (or any other institution for that matter) has an

effective anti-bullying strategy, then that strategy includes bullying that is happening for any reason (including reasons of sexuality), so why should it be considered necessary to have a separate policy on homophobic bullying?

Lastly, is "homophobia" (literally "fear of the same") really a useful word, or should it perhaps be quietly dropped?

**John Humphrey,**  
Sevenoaks

## Think twice over Ukip vote

FOR those residents thinking of voting Ukip in Thanet on May 7, it is worth remembering what happened at the last county council elections for representatives on the Kent County Council.

I can understand the desire to make a protest as many of us have grave concerns about Britain's continuing membership of the European Union. However the net result was the loss of any effective voice on the Conservative controlled council.

The group of Conservatives that lost their seats would have had far more influence over the KCC leadership than the Ukip novices, both in the areas of Thanet regeneration and indeed of saving Manston Airport.

To take this a step further, if indeed Nigel Farage was elected as MP for South Thanet he would have very little influence over Thanet's future. As a party leader of a minority party, one questions how much time he would have to represent Thanet or even time to spend in Thanet.

**David Wood,**  
Margate

## Avoid risk of a Blukip coalition

THERE has been much talk during this campaign about a Labour government propped up by the SNP. However, the other real danger is the possibility of a Blukip coalition, a right-wing Tory government propped up by Ukip and the DUP.

Reports suggest Nigel Farage will open 'back channels' to discuss a post-election pact with the Tories a week before election day.

We have already seen how David Cameron has struggled to keep control of the right-wing of his own party. Just imagine him being held to ransom by Nigel Farage. We could see Britain governed by a right-wing alliance that wants to reject gay rights, bring back the death penalty, scrap human rights legislation and privatise our schools and hospitals.

Voters have the chance to stop the keys to No 10 being handed to Blukip and keep the government anchored in the liberal centre ground.

**Catherine Bearder MEP,**  
Liberal Democrat

## KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

Archant's mission statement is: "We bring together motivated buyers and sellers through the creation of unique and compelling content and community expertise."

The way KoS will create our unique and

compelling content is to follow these 10 principles:

**Kent on Sunday will:**

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.

7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.

8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

**We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.**





## Walmer Castle gardens

by **Jose Martinez,**  
from Dover

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# Change Lives... Find out about fostering.

Advertisement Feature



**Fostering is possibly one of the most rewarding things you will ever do. Making a real difference to children's lives is a unique and immensely satisfying privilege.**

However, a chronic shortage of foster carers means that more committed foster carers are needed to help change young lives.

Many people considering a career as a foster carer think that the local council is their only option. Most are completely unaware that independent fostering organisations even exist.

Next Step Fostering was established 25 years ago by Maureen and Alb Ward – who were foster carers themselves – and therefore had personal experience of caring for vulnerable children. Next Step Fostering remains a family company to this day, with Registered Manager Neil McCarthy, and Director Lesley Ward's involvement with the company stretching back over twenty years.

Next Step provides a range of fostering services through offices in Kent, London and The Thames Valley and work in partnership with many Local Authorities across the South East of England.

A national shortage of foster carers means that children who

cannot live with their family are being moved away from their home communities, resulting in a change of school, community, friends and religious contacts. Every day, Next Step receives child referrals from Local Authorities, but due to the high levels of demand, do not have sufficient families to meet the needs of the many children being referred.

As a family run company, Next Step Fostering is able to offer a personal, individual service to its foster carers and children. Supervision, support and training can be tailored to individual needs and foster carers have an open invitation to approach Lesley Ward directly to discuss any issues they may have.

Fostering a child is not an easy task, but it is extremely rewarding – and thanks to the generous allowance Next Step Fostering pays, many people give up unfulfilling jobs to undertake a career in fostering, where they feel they can really make a difference to young lives.



Mary Cattell, an ex-carer herself and now Manager of the Chatham office, said "People often worry that they won't be suitable, based on things they have heard from friends or the media, but I would encourage anyone thinking about fostering to speak to us directly. We can answer all of their questions about the type of people we are looking for and what fostering is like."

**If you are considering a career in fostering or simply want to learn more, call into Next Step Fostering's Chatham office, at 85 High Street, Chatham, Kent ME4 4EE.**

**Alternatively you can call the Chatham office on 01634 838666 and speak to a member of their friendly team or visit their website at [www.nextstepfostering.org](http://www.nextstepfostering.org)**

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Half Board  
Nightly Entertainment



## Grand Burstin Hotel Folkestone Self-Drive Deals

May-August, 2015

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The Grand Burstin Hotel is set in a prime position overlooking Folkestone Harbour. It is renowned as one of the UK's top entertainment hotels, so you can relax, dine in style and be entertained all under one roof. Cabaret shows are performed every evening - fantastic entertainment for all ages! The Spindles Health Club has an indoor heated Swimming pool, sauna and a state of the art gym (£4 per session payable on site).

**INCLUDED:** 3 or 4 nights sharing a twin/double-bedded en suite room  
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Entertainment  
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Pontins Pakefield

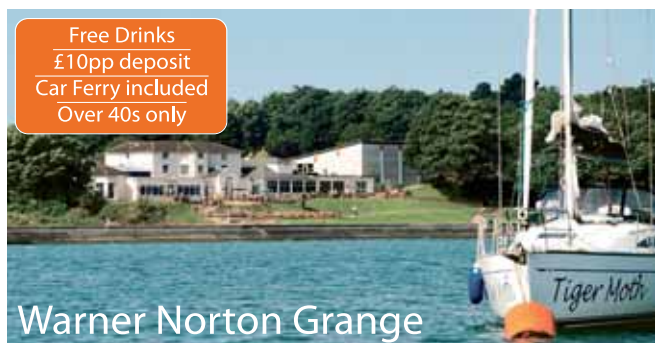
## Christmas Cracker Party through the Decades Self-Drive - 20 November, 2015

3 nights half board-plus, **£129pp** • Quote: CC11-KOS

Join us for an over 40s Christmas party weekend to remember as we re-wind the decades and go back to the 60s, 70s and 80s at Pontins Pakefield, by the sea near Lowestoft, Suffolk. Our great entertainment bill includes original 70s band Brotherhood of Man, 60s rockers The Swinging Blue Jeans and the new touring show Whitney - Queen of The Night. Add 3 Free Drinks per person per night and you've got the perfect recipe for a great party weekend.

**INCLUDED:** 3 Free drinks every night • house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers  
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Free Drinks  
£10pp deposit  
Car Ferry included  
Over 40s only



Warner Norton Grange

## Best of the 60s & 70s Christmas Party Self-Drive - 27 November, 2015

3 nights half board-plus, **£239pp** • Quote: XN11-KOS

Great Entertainment, Free Drinks, and a super location make Warner's Norton Grange resort, at Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight, our most popular Christmas Party venue. This Christmas we're featuring music from the 60s and 70s including Edison Lighthouse (*Love Grows where my Rosemary goes*) plus tributes to Dusty Springfield and Tom Jones and lots of festive and nostalgic fun. There's also a Free Bar from 6pm to midnight every night.

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**Note:** You cannot book this party break direct with Warner



Free Drinks  
Private Charter



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8 days semi all inclusive, from **£999pp** • Quote: RN9-KOS

Join us for a scenic, fun-packed cruise onboard the 4-star mps Rembrandt Van Rijn taking in the beautiful Rhine and Moselle Valleys, including the spectacular Rhine in Flames festival. Originally held to celebrate the grape harvest, this impressive pyrotechnics show also features an illuminated flotilla of riverboats. Also enjoy the Boppard Wine Festival featuring wines from local vineyards, live music and entertainment.

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Free Drinks  
Private Charter



## Secret Citadelle to Christmas Markets River Cruise by Rail or Air - Dinant, Aachen, Valkenburg & Brussels - 24 Nov, 2015

5 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£529pp** • Quote: TC11-1-KOS

Join us for a relaxing river cruise starting in the picturesque town of Dinant, located on the Meuse River and home to an impressive citadel. Sailing past scenic landscapes onto Namur, with its beautiful 17th and 18th-century architecture. We visit two exceptional Christmas Markets: Aachen in Germany, with a visit to the Lindt Chocolate Factory Outlet and Valkenburg in Holland, with its unique Christmas Caves. We also visit Brussels, the Belgian capital with its famous Christmas market and Grand Place.

**INCLUDED:** Escorted throughout  
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• 4-night full board cruise on the mps Princess sharing a twin outside rear cabin on Main Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine, & soft drinks served at lunch & dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad



By Steve Loader  
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

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KENT LIFE

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## Crossover gets 500 stardust

Italian brand Fiat aims to add to 500 number's success by applying it to a classy two and four-wheel drive mode, writes **Steve Loader...**

**C**ITROËN'S DS line-up will soon become a standalone brand and, at the current rate, you can imagine Fiat spinning off '500' too.

This potential scenario is highlighted by the new 500X crossover (from £14,595) the third model to wear that number and, despite the marketing speak, a car that's quite different from the retro city car/supermini that revitalized Fiat's image and fortunes after 2007.

But the Italian brand hopes some 500 stardust will shine 'X' sales, just as it has for its space-efficient people carrier duo, the 500L and seven-seat 500L MPW.

To be fair, there are more 500 genetics in the rounded 'X' design than the necessarily boxy 'L' models, which could have been sired by the milkman, but there are '500' badges everywhere lest you forget – even in the headlamp housings.

Fiat says the 500X plays on three strengths: 500 heritage, the aforementioned design, and substance – and it does indeed have a chunky quality to match the crossover/SUV looks – all summed up by the line "500X – the Stylish Adventurer".

It walks the talk here too, because, like some other Fiats, it sells in front-wheel drive, Trekking format – the front driving wheels have a sophisticated traction control for creditable



off-roading – or full 4x4.

I tried the 4x4 on a rough course at the launch, but it didn't really challenge this impressive version, with its decent ground clearance and selectable off-road mode.

Fiat predicts that the 500X will appeal particularly to younger men and less than 30 per cent will be fleet/company car sales, which

suggests the 140bhp turbocharged 1.4 petrol unit will sell best: it costs far less, offers 41.7mpg (official combined) and is lively and responsive on-road.

The diesels (1.6 and 2.0-litre) start from £19,095, calling for galactic mileage to recoup the extra outlay through their better diesel economy.



Fiat with



# **FIAT 500X** HAS ARRIVED.

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Fuel consumption figures for Fiat 500X Range, available at launch in mpg(l/100km): Urban 36.2 (7.8) – 60.1 (4.7); Extra Urban 56.5 (5.0) – 74.3 (3.8); Combined 47.1 (6.0) – 68.9 (4.1). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 144 – 109 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.



# Scout's honour is upheld by Skoda

'Be prepared' is the motto of the Scouts - Skoda's namesake estate lives up to it with no-nonsense all-round strength writes **Steve loader...**

**S**KODA couldn't have a better name for its Octavia all-rounder model – the Scout.

This higher riding 4x4 version (from £25,530), wearing protective add-ons like its owner might wear Barbour wellies and jacket, suggests it will go anywhere and, like a boy scout, be prepared for anything.

Of course, it won't yomp across seriously difficult terrain, but it will tackle a lumpy field and keep you safer when road conditions deteriorate thanks to extra traction diverted to the rear wheels when loss of grip is detected – normally, it runs in economic front-wheel drive only.

And despite modest dimensions – somewhere between the bulk of a family hatchback and a full-size family car like the Ford Mondeo - you can load it to the gunwales too.

The 610-litre boot opens out to 1,740 litres; the rear seats don't quite fold fully flat, but that's still enough room to beat all comers in the all-wheel drive estates stakes, but for the ageing and much dearer Volvo XC90.

So, now I've built it up as a motoring Swiss Army Knife, here's



what it's not prepared for: badge snobbery. This Scout's honour could take a beating if you rub shoulders with the huntin, shootin and fishin brigade at the local point-to-point or pheasant massacre... but I'd buy one just to wind up that lot.

What might put me off though is

the Scout's rather dour demeanour inside; the cabin errs towards robustness and durability. It's all neatly and thoughtfully arranged, as expected from VW's Czech arm, but does miss a little cheer and I would recommend specifying the panoramic sunroof (£950) to brighten things.



On the plus side, it is great value for money and cheap to run for an all-wheel drive car, with a claimed 55.4mpg on the combined cycle and £105 or £125 a year road tax depending on whether you opt for the standard 2.0-litre diesel in 150PS (147bhp) form with six-speed

## Skoda Octavia Scout 2.0TDI 184PS DSG

Price:	from £27,990
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	SEAT Leon X-Perience

manual gearbox or the same engine with 185PS (182bhp) output plus the VW group's impressive DSG twin-clutch auto 'box.

The latter (as tested) can be driven easily as a manual and incurs no economy penalty other than the additional £2,675 paid upfront for the DSG model and the extra power.

The horsepower bonus also brings 0-62mph in an impressive 7.8 seconds, versus 9.1 for the manual car, though I would rather save cash and go for the manual as it's plenty fast enough for this type of car.

Despite the extra ride height, the Scout is steady on corners, with little body roll and very comfortable and refined in a straight line, with the smooth engine adding to the feeling of well-being. In short, the Scout is prepared for all eventualities.



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# Peugeot takes the sporting GT Line

**PREVIEW:** Famous French marque 'sportifies' key models with an all-new racy trim that echoes a famous GTi dynasty, including the legendary 205GTi, writes **Steve Loader**...

**P**EUGEOT has had some dubious trim lines of late. For instance, I'm not sure 'Allure' trim is of great interest, while 'Feline' sounds a bit too feminine, certainly for male buyers – you wouldn't shout out loud that you'd just bought a Peugeot 208 Feline would you?

But I think the upwardly mobile French marque may have hit the target this time with the new 'GT Line', applied to the forthcoming revised 208 supermini, 308 family hatch and estate, 508 family range, and racy RCZ coupe.

As you might guess, it's a high spec level with a sporty bias inspired by Peugeot's famous GTi models – the current 208 GTi being the latest torch bearer.

So, most new GT Line models stand apart with larger wheels, twin exhausts, a battery of LED lights, and all get distinctive black and red trim and 'GT Line' badging on the bodywork – now, that sounds like a new car you would shout about.

The model that should benefit most from the package is the 308; a slick and slippery design that was crying out for the GTi treatment, so the Peugeot lion badge has been moved



from the bonnet to within the grille, visually lowering the front and making it more aggressive. It also has a staggering 142 LED lights – a lot of bragging rights for those who must cut a dash.

But the winning add-ons are

18-inch 'Diamant' alloys, sill finishers, black lacquered diffuser, twin exhaust tailpipes, plus GT Line signatures applied to the grille, bonnet and wings.

The cabin also gets a racy look: red stitching on the leather and suede-

effect seats, leather-clad steering wheel, door panels, dashboard and gear lever gaiter, stainless steel door sill finishers and aluminium on the foot rest and pedals.

But Peugeot, let's please have a 308 GTi too?



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Fuel consumption figures for Fiat 500X Range, available at launch in mpg (l/100km): Urban 36.2 (7.8) – 60.1 (4.7); Extra Urban 56.5 (5.0) – 74.3 (3.8); Combined 47.1 (6.0) – 68.9 (4.1). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 144 – 109 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Vehicles coming soon, available to order now.



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Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the ŠKODA Octavia range: Urban 34.9 (8.1) to 74.3 (3.8), Extra Urban 52.3 (5.4) to 94.2 (3.0), Combined 44.1 (6.4) to 88.3 (3.2). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the ŠKODA Octavia range: 149 to 85g/km. Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results



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This post would suit newly qualified teachers, or those wishing to gain further experience of SEN. Comprehensive induction and training will be provided. Telephone enquiries and informal visits to the school welcomed

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

Closing Date: 1st May 2015

Interviews: 12th May 2015

For further details and a job description, please contact Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP (01634 338236), stating the position for which you are applying.

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**The College will be hosting an open afternoon/evening on Thursday, 30th April 2015 and an open morning on Wednesday, 6th May 2015.**

For an informal discussion please contact Lindsey Morgan,

Assistant Principal on **01634 383119**.

Please contact [job.applications@midkent.ac.uk](mailto:job.applications@midkent.ac.uk)

for an application pack or visit [www.midkent.ac.uk](http://www.midkent.ac.uk)

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Working hours are 37 hours p/w, term time only. Candidates should hold a relevant Speech and Language Therapy degree/qualification. Benefits include: Local Authority pension scheme, induction training, performance management programme and Continuous Professional Development. Visits to the school are welcomed.

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount, and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

For an application pack, or to make an appointment to visit, please telephone (stating the role for which you are applying):

Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3SP  
(01634 338236)

Please note CV's will not be accepted

**Closing Date: 8th May 2015**  
**Interviews: 18th May 2015**

Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

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### Staff Nurse - Ward – Ashford

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#### Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse 1st level
- Evidence of continual professional development
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- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Liz Justice, Ward Manager on 01233 616256

### Staff Nurse - Ward – Margate

Full time Hours: 37.5 per week Closing date: 7/05/2015  
Salary: Dependent on qualifications and experience

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse 1st level
- Evidence of continual professional development
- Experience in a surgical/medical environment with a knowledge and understanding of surgical/medical procedures
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Mary Guarnieri, Ward Manager on 01843 234249

For a job description and application form for either post please visit [www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers](http://www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers)  
Alternatively, please contact Justine Whittle, HR Assistant  
Telephone: 01304 245943 E-mail: [recruitment@spencerhospitals.com](mailto:recruitment@spencerhospitals.com)

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## LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

### LICENSING ACT 2003:

#### Application for Premises Licence

Julie HAMER of The Offy, 52B High Street, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 1JY

has applied to Thanet District Council, P.O. Box 9, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent for the Grant of a Premises Licence under the Licensing Act 2003.

A copy of the application may be inspected during normal office hours at the Thanet District Council offices, address above. The licensable activities will be: Supply of Alcohol 10:00 to 22:00 hrs Sunday to Thursday, and 10:00 to 23:00 hrs Friday and Saturday.

Any representations in respect of the application should be made in writing to the Licensing Department, Thanet District Council, P.O. Box 9 Cecil Street, Margate, Kent by the 14th May 2015.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence is £5000.

### Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Mr Chris Porcas and Mrs Sarah Porcas trading as Forestall Ltd of The Old Wood Yard, Watling Street, Bean, Dartford, Kent DA2 8AH is applying to change an existing license as follows

To keep an extra 2 goods vehicles and 0 trailers at the operating centre at Forestall Ltd, The Old Wood Yard, Watling Street, Bean, Dartford, Kent DA2 8AH

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

### Application for the variation of a premises licence – Licensing Act 2003 Londis, 10 -11 Market Square, Dover, CT16 1NX

Notice is hereby given that K Varatharajan & P Varatharajan of the above address have applied to Dover District Council for the variation of the a premises licence to sell alcohol between the hours of 06:00 and 22:00 hours Monday to Sunday at the above premises.

A register of licensing applications can be inspected at <http://www.dover.gov.uk/licensing> or at Dover District Council, Honeywood Close, Dover, Kent. CT16 3PJ by appointment with the Licensing Team between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

Any person wishing to submit representations in favour or against our application must give notice in writing to DovDistrict Council at the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objection. The last date for representations is Monday 18th May 2015.

### APPLICATION TO FOR THE GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that we Indie Coffee and Eats Ltd, have applied to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council for a new premises licence in respect of the premises known as The Swan Street Café, 19/21, Swan Street, West Malling ME19 to permit the following licensable activities: -

\* Sale of Alcohol

The application can be viewed at the offices of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent. ME19 4LZ during normal office hours. [www.tmbc.gov.uk](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk)

Any representations from interested parties or responsible authorities must be made in writing to the above local authority, clearly stating the grounds upon which representation is made relevant to the Licensing Act by 15th May 2015

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine, level 5 on the standard scale, is a maximum of £5,000 for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence.

Stephen Thomas LAW

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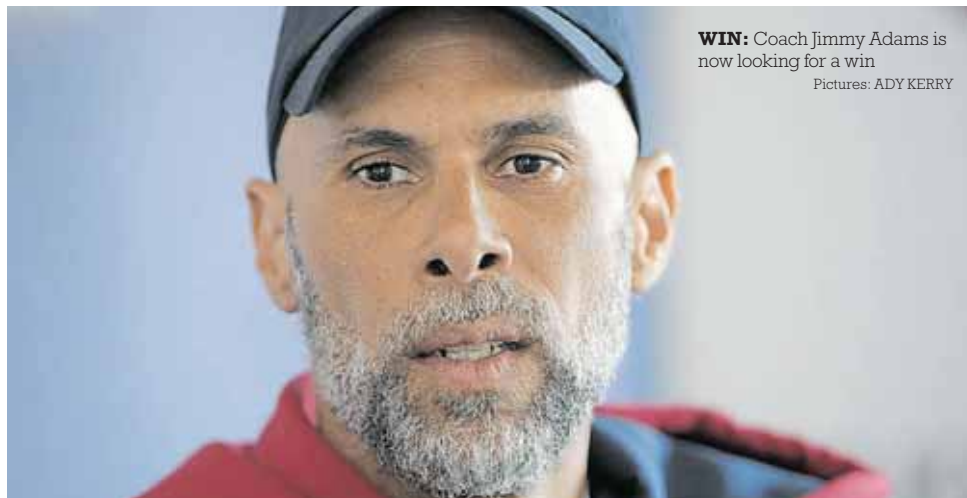
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# Kent look to get a win against Lancs

County side's season off to poor start with loss away to Essex



**WIN:** Coach Jimmy Adams is now looking for a win

Pictures: ADY KERRY

## Cricket

By Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

KENT County Cricket Club will be hoping they can get off to a good start against Lancashire, as their second County Championships Division Two game gets underway today (April 26).

The team struggled in their opening game of the season at Essex, on what one Kent source described as 'one of the greenest pitches ever seen'.

Putting Kent's batsmen at the crease first, Essex's seamers and swingers were able to create a tough environment to build runs – something which dogged the Kent side and saw a flurry of wicket in both sides first innings.

Essex skipper James Foster's fine rearguard action – which saw him smash 10 fours and one six to grab an unbeaten 80 – on the final day of the match meant Kent took their first loss this season by five wickets; hardly the strong start they wanted in a year which sees them gunning for promotion.

The game against Lancashire offers the side the chance to get their season back on track.

It won't be easy against a Lancashire side which made short work of Derbyshire in their opening game of the season.

They slaughtered the midlands team, winning by 250 runs in a game that saw Derbyshire penalised one point for a slow over rate.

Speaking to KoS, Kent's coach Jimmy Adams said his side were up for match against Lancashire.

He said: "We've put the Essex game

to one side, and moved on. The boys have trained really hard, and been doing well on the pitch.

"Now we're going to be looking to build on that hard work at Lancashire and get some points on the board."

One thing likely to give the team a boost is experienced batsman Brendan Nash rejoining them for the match.

The former West Indian Test batsman, who, while at Kent has added around 3,000 runs, is well known as a safe pair of hands who is capable of putting runs on the board.

After last season left him disappointed, he'll have a point to prove to Kent's management this year.

Nash has, in the past, acted as something of a mentor to many of the less experienced players. He'll now be eager to show his worth against the squad's young guns.

## Ebbfleet sack Day after just months in charge

IN a move which came as a shock to many, Ebbfleet United have sacked manager Jamie Day just five months after he was given the reins at the club.

Day had presided over a string of poor performances, with just seven wins out of the 20 games he was in charge. However, when appointed, Fleet vice-chairman Peter Varney had stated that there was no pressure on Day to achieve promotion.

Fleet announced the ending of his contract in a statement which was put on their website.

It stated that Day had been fired with immediate effect.

Darryl 'Macca' McMahon and Steve Gritt took charge for the Fleet's final game of the season against Bishop's Stortford yesterday (April 25).

McMahon has been tipped by



**FIRED:** Day failed to bring the success demanded by the Fleet's board

some as potentially taking the hotseat on a more permanent basis, after working as caretaker manager fol-

lowing the departure of Day's predecessor Steve Brown in November last year.

Macca managed to win two of the three games he was in charge.

The Fleet may also want a more high-profile manager, as, with big financial backing from Kuwaiti owner Dr Abdulla Al-Humaidi, money might not be a big issue.

Al-Humaidi's deep pockets bought a total of 11 players during Day's tenure, hinting that he wants to see the squad move up in class.

The multi-million pound Stonebridge Road stadium redevelopment also signals Fleet chiefs are getting ready to fight at a higher level. The club has said that the season has been 'turbulent', and will now be hoping that by starting 2015/2016 with a new manager, they can find promotion.

## Sport Shorts

» Email [sports@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:sports@kosmedia.co.uk) or call Jamie Weir on 01233 653481

## PGA pro Godwin wins first PGA Kent contest

PGA professional and Barnehurst resident Jordan Godwin shot a level par round of 71 at Lydd Golf Club to claim the first PGA Kent Closed Championship.

The new tournament is a collaboration between the PGA in Kent and the Kent Golf Union. The tournament is being hosted on Lydd's links-style course for the first three years.

Godwin said: "The strong winds made course management trickier, but my ball striking was really good and I kept my ball flight under control despite the strong winds. The greens were fantastic, very true and among the best surfaces we'll play this year."

Secretary of the PGA in Kent, Sam Smith, said: "The PGA in Kent Closed Championship is really going to extend the ways in which we can make the relationship between both professional and amateur organisations and golfers, especially for those amateurs that want to pursue careers in golf, maybe even for some who are thinking about a future in the PGA."



**CHAMP:** Godwin took the win on the links-style course



**SECOND:** But Byrne still heads up the championship league table

## Shakey just second best at home circuit

SHANE 'Shakey' Byrne could only manage second place when he took to his home track over the weekend.

The four-time British Superbike champion is gunning for a historic fifth title this year, and got the season off to a flying start in the first race at Donington.

He was unable to replicate that performance at Brands, despite saying he had got rid of some of the rust.

He said: "I'm feeling better on the bike already from a fitness and strength point of view after the

pre-season testing crash and will continue training away from the track as hard as possible to improve myself.

"I was reasonably happy with two second places, I hate losing - I appreciate I can't win them all, but it felt good to be on the podium thanks to my hard work of the team."

"We still need to work harder and push for more. For myself and the team second is never enough. We have a test this week at Oulton Park and I'm hoping we can build some more momentum there."

## Lashings All-Stars set for Teston

LASHINGS All-Stars have announced a star studded lineup in their first summer tour clash.

They will take on Teston village cricket club on June 5 in a match which will celebrate the opening of Teston's new pavilion.

Lashings will field a team skippered by ex-England star Phillip Defreitas in the T20 battle.

Other cricketing legends such as Gordon Greenidge, John Emburey and 2015 Lashings beneficiary Devon Malcolm will take to the field for the All-Stars.

Local residents will also have to watch their windows, after it was announced West Indian boundary smasher Tino Best had rejoined the Lashings squad.

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